

Music & Letters

A Quarterly Publication

Edited by

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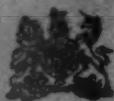
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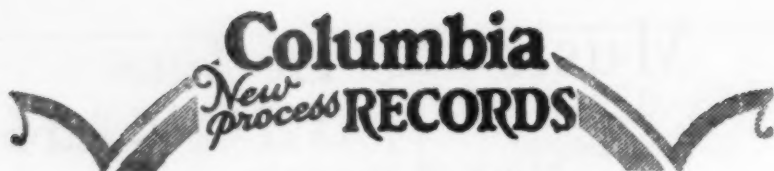
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Music and Letters

APRIL, 1930.

VOLUME XI

No. 2

MADE IN ENGLAND

NOT much music goes on as a rule in the early months of the year; still, there have been two things that have struck the imagination—Mr. Robert Stuart's bout of opera in January was one of them. This had inexperience written all over it; amateurs on the stage might pass, but amateur conductors? That was playing with fire. There was a lack of rehearsal that all could see and hear. Pass all that. The refreshing thing was the zest and adventure, and the stout protest against conventional safe operas. We hammer away, as a rule, at 'Aida' and 'Il Trovatore' as boys slog at the fifth and forty-seventh propositions of the first book of Euclid. Here we had 'Orfée' (Monteverde), 'Julius Caesar' (Handel) and 'La finta Giardiniera' (Mozart) that were quite new to us, and remain a possession for those who heard them. And all three of these composers wrote a good deal besides opera, as also did Purcell, whose 'Dido and Aeneas' was also presented, and that is not the case with Verdi and Wagner. The result of that was to eliminate operatic clichés and to let a little more fresh air in, to provide less drama and more music to the square inch. No doubt the world has, for its conventional repertory, chosen on the whole the best, but we can't be sure of that without hearing also the *proxime accessit's* occasionally. The best arrangement is what we hope Sir Thomas Beecham is going to give us in September, a mixture of old and new, with a slight balance on the side of the new.

The other thing is Sir Henry Wood's invasion of the Coliseum, where he was received thumbs down. I feel sure he will not object to a small quotation from a letter he wrote me:—

'What pleased the members of my orchestra most was the wonderfully attentive silence of this very mixed audience, and the fact that they liked the quiet pieces by Bach, Mozart, Schumann, etc., better than the brilliant noisy ones. . . . It is a marvellously run theatre and we were all made to feel happy and contented. . . . Sir Oswald Stoll's experiment proved a real popular success.'

It was not merely the silence, which might be the pleasant antithesis to hilarity, nor the surprise, which might merely be gaping at a novelty, but the close attention that astonished one. One expected in a slow quiet piece, for instance, a little rustling and fidgeting before it was over. But the 'Air on the G string' went through with all its repeats in perfect stillness, and was received with an interest which it is no exaggeration to call breathless. It was as if the audience were now tranquilly exercising a right that had long been denied them, not so much satisfying curiosity as quenching a thirst. The applause was not noisily sporadic but quietly general.

The actual *mise en scène* was extraordinarily good for a first try. It would have been even better if it had been possible in the time to install the 'acoustical shell' which Sir Henry had drawn to scale for the 'turntable'; its absence gave a little undue weight to the brass as against the strings. But there they were, under the conductor in whom they have confidence, and there was he, who has deserved it through more than a generation, setting on his work the seal of universal acknowledgment. It was a historic moment.

These two events, and others like them, make one feel that a writer on a later page is not wrong when he begins his essay with the words, 'The springs of musical enthusiasm in England appear to be unfathomable.' They differ, in that one was a spontaneous outburst of corporate enthusiasm, the other the life-work of one man; they are alike in being, both of them, entirely home-grown. But there is one respect in which the music at the Coliseum stands alone: it is the first direct outcome of broadcasting. For there can be no question that that audience had been acclimatised to serious music. Something in the air had told them that music was a more rational and more accessible thing than they had supposed, and something in the ether had convinced them of it; and they came to make sure they were right, as people go to see if Dartmoor is as lovely as Widgey says it is.

What we are witnessing is the initial stage of the democratisation of beauty. The first motor-cars littered and desecrated the scenery: the first cinemas sliced and mauled the musical classics. There are signs that it will not always be so. As the receptacles for rubbish in the parks, the notices about 'bus tickets, the gradual removal of glaring field and roadside advertisements, and the publication of good photographs in the daily Press, all tend to suggest to the wayfarer that it does matter how things look, so the music clubs, school orchestras, competition festivals, revisions of hymn-books, bands, and choral societies, are so many reminders that it does matter how things sound. And when the man with an umbrella and the 8.35

to catch has turned this over in his mind for a few years, it is just possible that his conversation and habits of life will begin to produce an atmosphere, out of which eventually may come a school of water-colour painters or a school of madrigalists, or such modification of these as may suit the twentieth century. The Dutch pictures did, and the Italian do, remind us that life can be lived on such terms with beauty; and Troubadours, the Meistersinger, the Flemish school, the Viennese composers are there to bear witness that out of the eater can come forth meat.

Many good people are of opinion that the way to hasten this millennium is to smooth the path and pat the back of any aspirant. But what is wanted in music, as in everything else, is a fair field and no favour. To pretend that a thing is good because it is British is the way to make British things less good. Plenty of opportunity, by all means; find or make one. Give a boy access to an instrument, new music when he has read all he has, a few concert tickets; give a girl who wants to sing a clarinet, for the time when the courage that real singing demands shall have failed her; support the cause by entertaining your friends with a trio or quartet party of enthusiasts who mean business; start a musical lending library, feed it, manage it, bequeath to it; subscribe to a set of Braille; dig in music, old or new, yourself, and see if you haven't got a pen; urge, and frank, your village choir to the local festival, and conduct them if you can't get anyone better. But don't tell your protégés they're good, don't have rewards for them, don't let them off something else, if, etc., don't let them turn on wireless for a lark but as a privilege, and before they embark on a musical profession ask some sensible man like Dr. Percy Buck what he thinks about it. And if a boy does enter it, let him set to work at once to find out what exactly he can and can't do. The older the world gets, the less room there is for anybody but a specialist.

BEETHOVEN AND CESAR FRANCK

The Church which was once the mother of poets no less than of saints, during the last two centuries has relinquished to aliens the chief glories of poetry if the chief glories of holiness she has preserved for her own. The palm and the laurel, Dominic and Dante, sanctity and song, grew together in her soil; she has retained the palm, but forgone the laurel. Poetry in its widest sense, and when not professedly irreligious, has been too much and too long among many Catholics either misprised or distrusted; too much and too generally the feeling has been that it is at best superfluous, at worst pernicious, most often dangerous.

AND in the very year that Francis Thompson wrote those words, César Franck was blending sanctity and song, and entwining palm and laurel. After years of conscientious toil and humble aspiration, his poetic spirit was at last bringing forth the fruit of simple faith, and fusing holiness and beauty. In the next year he died, little known and still less understood, but leaving a small band of disciples through whose devotion and energy his music has become known throughout the world. And this understanding has made men take measure of his stature, and speculate as to his spiritual ancestry.

The nature of his work, both in inspiration and form, invites comparison with Beethoven, and Vincent d'Indy immediately grasped such affinities as may be discerned; but true as his observations may be, he does not express the fundamental difference between the spiritual experiences of the two composers. He approaches his comparison from the point of view of form, and argues that Franck trod a new path only roughly indicated in certain of Beethoven's latest works; but although he says that Franck only wrote when he had some experience to embody, he does not interrelate the spiritual and formal affinities and divergences of the two composers. It so happens that the comparison of Beethoven and Franck forms a most illuminating commentary on the transfusion of spiritual environment and the inspiration of genius, and, at the same time, from a more intimately musical point of view, illustrates the reaction of content on form. The most significant works of both these musicians are inspired by the deepest penetrative perception, and reveal unsur-

passed sincerity and faith, but by most dissimilar paths was spiritual affirmation attained. And so, in form, the classical structure which both use is made plastic by the warmth of their creative genius, and bears the unmistakable impress of their differences.

I

The extent to which Beethoven and Franck represent the spirit of their age, and the degree in which they help to form this spirit, are questions incapable of precise answer; for the genius perceives what is implicit in his spiritual environment, and yet is the leader of those same people of whom his environment is composed. It is as though the artist plumbs the subconscious of a people, revealing ideas and tendencies which only became assimilated into the ordinary material of consciousness by a most gradual process. And even then the artist's perceptions become coloured in the process of expression by his own most intimate and individual introspection. And it is on the degree of this particularly individual element that the fundamental differentiation between romantic and classical really rests. The classical mind is characterised by a greater self-effacement, and in its finer moments works from the widest possible foundation; it grasps the most permanent elements and winnows out the transient; it conceives these elements as the product of the larger mind, the mind of the age, and does not strive to leave the impress of individuality writ large, but leaves it, almost unconsciously, subtly and surely writ. In consequence, the classical forms are clearly defined, but slightly flexible—highly crystallised, yet keenly sensitive. The romantic is in his extremest moments the antithesis of this. The mind, the spirituality of his environment, he sees in his own, or refracted through his own, and often fails to dissociate the one from the other. Instead of his spiritual process being synthetic and basically rational, it becomes analytical and intuitive; it tends mostly to emotionalism, and often attains a morbid querulousness. So if the classical attitude has the virtue of breadth of view and comprehensiveness, the romantic may claim a greater intimacy and depth; but neither of these tendencies carried to an extreme is healthy. A classicism forgetting that a sense of humour is essential to a sense of humanity, is cold and sterile, its bleak and uncompromising isolation will attract but few, and them often for effect or from a sense of curiosity. It is, in fact, a false classicism, as false as the romanticism whose introspection, however penetrative, becomes circumscribed and morbid, and whose landscape becomes a parade ground for fantastic imagery. But departing from extremes, there is a space wherein a balanced judgment can blend

the classical and romantic elements to their mutual advantage. Such artists as Milton and Mozart stand at the classical extreme of such a fusion, yet their sympathies and personalities are implicit in their works. Standing nearer to romanticism, and surveying mankind with perhaps profounder penetration than either Milton or Mozart, is Beethoven, who rested secure in a position where none but the greatest genius could stand, and remained because he could see beneath the ephemeral elements of his ideological environment. His insight gave him a just view of human progress, a view as unassailable and even more prophetic, than that which came before with Rousseau's constructive ideas of human society, or that which came later with Darwin and the development of science. In Beethoven the romantic and classical elements, the subjective and objective attitudes, seem to be blended in perfect proportions, but Franck, in spite of his adherence to, and adaptation of classical form, was much more individualistic in content, and had not nearly so mighty a mind as Beethoven.

Turning to the surroundings on which Beethoven has cast such light, there is revealed a Europe more minutely analysed than at any other period. It is impossible to crystallise all the significant events and ideas into a few sentences, but it is essential to point to more general tendencies of the century, as a prelude to the comprehension of Beethoven's outlook. The period is conventionally regarded as one of spiritual decline on the one hand, and of rather uncompromising rationality on the other, in fact, the age of reason. Superficially this is so, but the implications of such a view are unsatisfactory, for they point to an eternal conflict of reason and soul, and this based on the assumption that spiritual insight is insusceptible of rational effort, and that the intellect must be lulled, rather than quickened by spiritual emotion. Such a view, from the spiritual angle, is clearly prepared to countenance adhesion to outworn tradition and dogma, and apart from such a passive state of mind being acceptable to priests, it found no effective denial among the rationalists. For so keen were they to establish the omniscience of reason that they overlooked the higher and more abstract activities of the intellect, those activities which we regard as merging into the perceptions of the soul. And the cause of rationalists was further vitiated by their ideas becoming as dogmatic and rigid as the dogmas of the Church they derided; yet for those ideas men made a revolution as deep and far-reaching as any precipitated in the cause of the Church. 'La Révolution sera donc idéologique et dogmatique,' it was remarked, and like all causes fought for principles, relentless, logical and humourless, it wrought a tremendous convulsion in all but man himself.

But those years which were forming the material for Beethoven's

spiritual synthesis did see a positive decline in the spirituality of the Church, quite unconnected with the direct challenge of the *Philosophes*. The great leaders, Fénelon and Bossuet, for instance, had been replaced by smaller men, while the Church as a whole was divided by the action of Josephism, Gallican and Febronian tendencies, and the germane antagonism of ideas of the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome and of papal infallibility. In its more domestic aspects also, it was losing grip. The life of the upper clergy was one of luxury; services were becoming excuses for concerts, and preaching was declining. Louis XVI once remarked after a sermon, 'If the Abbé had only said a little about Christianity there is no subject which he would have left untouched.' As Dr. Pullan says, 'Amid the peach-coloured marble, the gilded cornices, the floating cherubs, and columns twisting themselves in sympathy with statues of saints who writhe in eloquence or ecstasy, St. Benedict and St. Bernard could only have come as visitors, ill at ease if not indignant.' Nor was Protestantism in a more healthy state, while on the other side the sons of the age of reason were accumulating knowledge and contesting their ideas with assiduity and conviction. And on a humbler plane than that of philosophy, ideas of freedom and social justice were finding expression. One has only to look into the highways and byways of literature, and to recall examples such as Marivaux's '*Jeu de l'Amour et du Hasard*' where parental authority is disregarded, or Beaumarchais's '*Barbier de Seville*' where Count Almaviva's rank is impotent without the cunning of Figaro.

There were, then, two main sources of inspiration, the direct spirituality of the Church, tarnished by neglect and crusted over with dogma likely to repel those not prepared to move patiently and go deep, and the intellectual aspiration of the *Philosophes*, attractive equally to the dilettante and the serious thinker. The practical experience of the Church extended over centuries, but much of it had been rejected or ill-garnered; the *Philosophes* had ranged only over the fields of verbiage and theory. Moreover, both systems had deficiencies in common, they were too narrow and too rigid; but while they contended bitterly, Beethoven came to manhood in a world which sought the fusion of intellect and soul, which was finding first principles and despairing a superstructure, and which was seeking truth along the road of abstract perfectibility, rather than that of human progress. Beethoven's intellect became the focus of two seemingly opposed tendencies, and by abstracting the spirit of Christ from the encumbrance of the Church, and dissociating reason from its attendant materialism and idolatry, it brought together a purified spirit and an ennobled reason for the procreation of a love-begotten faith and a hope unmoved by the ephemeral disillusion of events.

César Franck was born five years before Beethoven's death, and into a world reacting in almost all its aspects from the one in which Beethoven had lived. Following 1815, the years that shattered new hopes brought back old faiths, and gave the world in place of a spiritual revaluation, a religious revival. During those years, men sought to derive future aspiration from past experience, and to substitute a readjustment for a revolution. They would brook no compromise with the anti-god they had defeated, and spurned the principles which had been parodied by their exponents—liberty that had degenerated into licence, equality that had merely shifted the centre of gravity from aristocracy to bourgeoisie, and fraternity overshadowed by the guillotine. The rule of the ideologists had faded in the twilight of their gods, and war-worn nations felt that the old is good. The volcano, men hoped, was extinct, certainly dormant, and kings, statesmen and prelates united to uproot all traces of the eruption. But sedulous as they were in bringing back the *ancien régime* in its outward forms they could not revive its spirit. There was a feeling that mankind had entered upon a new era, had inherited new hopes and aspirations. And moreover, the revolutionary element was almost more dangerous in defeat than it had been in victory. It had been driven under, but was chastened by experience and realised the disparity between its philosophy and man's psychology. Aware of its deficiencies both in word and deed, it moved forward more cautiously, ramifying through the whole gamut of man's activities. The revolutionary attitude precipitated outbreaks all over Europe, and loosed pent-up nationalities, but it was in the intellectual and spiritual emancipation of mankind that the deepest significance of the century lay. Rationalism that set out as a crude utilitarianism became refined and enlightened as years went by. The scientific spirit, as we understand it, applied its infinite diligence and critical acumen to every aspect of life.

But at first it was a rough tool, roughly used, and sought to reduce the whole range of man's experience to concrete laws. It fell into conflict with the Church, and good Catholics closed the door and retired within their own house; and they had a worthy house. The vitality of the Catholic Church throughout the nineteenth century was almost greater than in the days of Hildebrand or of the Counter-Reformation, for it survived a conflict more profound than any precipitated by the political antagonism of the mediæval state, or the doctrinal attitude of Protestantism. It was faced by positive irreligion and a grossness of outlook which overshadowed finer perceptions, and certainly drove some of the keenest sensibilities within the Church. They felt that they perceived something mightier than the works of reason, and found the Church strong to withstand assault, for it emerged from

the shadows of Napoleonic domination with the set purpose of resuscitating its weakened kingdom over the souls of men. There was the political aspect of this revival, the restoration of the Papal States, the religious factor in the Belgian Revolution, the *Sonderbund* and the *Kulturkampf*, when even Bismark was reminded of Canossa. But the day of a political Church had gone, and the re-establishment of the Jesuits was a more powerful line of attack. More significant still, however, was the influence of Alphonsus Liguori, culminating in the proclamation by his disciple, the renowned Pio Nono, of the doctrine of Papal Infallibility. And at the same time, some of the most distinguished French writers, Chateaubriand, de Maistre, de Bonald and Lamennais were devoting their abilities to the defence of Christianity, and seeking to catholicise Liberalism; while in Germany there was an opposite tendency, most marked in the writings of Döllinger, to intellectualise Catholicism. But the lasting victory lay with the authoritarian principles of Ultramontanism and the closing of the door to the intellectual and national characteristics of the century.

So, as in Beethoven's time, there were two broad currents of mental and spiritual activity, seemingly mutually exclusive, but here the choice was more difficult. On the one hand was an intellectualism stabilised by experience, convincing, and day by day justifying itself by works; on the other hand was the Church, watchful and active, visibly manifesting the Kingdom of God that it preached, and justifying itself by faith. In this atmosphere César Franck grew up. Eight years after his birth, Belgium revolted against her arbitrary and anomalous union with Holland, and religion was a leading factor in the revolt. During his early manhood he saw in France the gradual victory of Ultramontanism over the Gallican tradition, after a conflict extending over forty years from the Restoration of 1814. And in his music, Franck expresses a spiritual state which must have been that of many sincere Catholics during those anxious years—the doubt, the yearning, the dawning insight and the glorious affirmation. He stands as a supreme example of intuitive conviction of the beauty and truth of the Church's teaching, a conviction not passively assumed, but mystically attained.

The differences between the religious perceptions of Beethoven and Franck, and their approach thereto seem most expressively embodied in the words 'Seek and ye shall find: Knock and it shall be opened unto you.' There are, after all, only two ways of attaining faith, the one by building it up step by step, the other by waiting receptively and accepting unquestioningly. The former process is infinitely the rarer, and also the more valuable, for it makes a positive contribution to the spiritual heritage of civilisation by extending some element of

originality, if not in basis, certainly in synthesis. There is profound truth in what Professor Whitehead has said :—

There is very little real first-hand expression in the world. By this I mean that most expression is what may be termed responsive expression, namely, expression which expresses intuitions elicited by the expressions of others. This is as it should be; since in this way what is permanent, important and widely spread, receives more and more a clear definition.

But there is need for something more than this responsive expression. For it is not true that there is easy apprehension of the great formative generalities. They are embedded under the rubbish of irrelevant detail. Men knew a lot about dogs before they thought of backbones and of vertebrates. The great intuitions which in their respective provinces set all things right, dawn but slowly upon history.

With this prevalence of responsive expression, we are used to a learned literature and to imitative conduct. When we get anything which is neither learned nor imitative, it is often very evil. But sometimes it is genius.

Now in the light of this, the differentiation of Beethoven and Franck becomes more clear. Beethoven built up his faith on the widest possible foundations, the revaluation of accepted ideas, the widening of conceptions and the deepening of penetration. His work is typical of the mind which submits the notions of a past age to the criticism of present knowledge, and thereby fosters a constant adjustment and a gradual process of evolution. Branches of dogma that had withered and ceased to be fruitful, he cut away, unrestrained by any access of sentimentality, and in consequence of his perceptions, he stands among the great geniuses of the world. Without adding a fact to man's stock of knowledge, he took, as Shakespeare did, all that mankind grasped, and made it new. He gathered up all the attainments and aspirations like so many threads, and wove their diversity into a wonderful new fabric. He gave the world a re-examination and a new synthesis, a new expression evoking its proper response.

How different was the faith of Franck! His expression is responsive expression, less comprehensive, more intimate, but not nearly so significant. His view was limited by the Church; he accepted its dogmas and traditions. His attitude then, is not synthetic, for he accepts meekly the synthesis he is given, the synthesis of the Roman Catholic Church, and awaits patiently the affirmation of its truth. His contribution could not be to the comprehensive aspect of spiritual life; he was not synthetic, but analytic. And here he cannot lead, he can only affirm the fact of affirmation. His expression is responsive expression lit by his own individual attainment. He cannot take his faith and show the process by which it was built up, but he can

take the faith he has received and disclose its beauty and its holiness. He can persuade others to wait patiently until revelation comes to them, he cannot lead them to revelation. He is intuitive, mystical, and only to be approached in the spirit of his own works, with patience and with humbleness of heart.

It must not be inferred, however, that Franck was in any sense a thorough-going romantic, for had he been he would have been drawn to the vital romantic forms about him, instead of being moved to classical expression which had been continued, but only slightly developed since Beethoven's time. But it seems clear from the nature of his individualism that he had a pronounced romantic strain in his thought. His singular naiveté and that intensely personal idiom are unmistakable signs of it. But along with these elements of romantic egoism, there seem to be traces of another egoism, a classical egoism which Mr. Lascelles Abercrombie has differentiated. In 'Romanticism' he says:—

In this matter of egoism, some comparison seems possible between classicism and romanticism. For often enough we hear of egoism in poets pre-eminent for the classicism of their art: Milton and Goethe, for example. But this is not the egoism we have just been considering; not the poet's sense of such importance in himself that he forgets or discredits the importance of the world he must inhabit; or perhaps makes its importance depend on its ability to nourish his regard for himself. Milton and Goethe (I exclude the latter's adolescent egoism) were interested in themselves, and deeply concerned to cultivate themselves, precisely in order that they might be fit and able to make the world their topic. They devoted their art to the truth of it, and to the destiny of its people; and just because they felt themselves capable of an adequate consciousness of the world were they so vividly conscious of themselves.

So with Beethoven, but Franck's 'adequate consciousness' was limited to the Church, and this classical egoism he blended with that other egoism of an intensely personal type. His general experience seems to be not unrelated to that of St. Francis of Assisi, and unconsciously he wove into the fabric of Catholic Christianity threads of what Dean Inge has distinguished as a third type of Christianity, the Platonic or mystical type. Beethoven had much more of the classical and less of the romantic element, almost to the entire exclusion of mysticism, and even if one sees this in his latest works, it is because he has completed his synthetic process, and had turned to the analysis of all its implications. Franck received a faith and justified it before himself, Beethoven built up a faith and justified it before mankind. But Franck seemed to be clinging to a passing

order of things. As Dean Inge says, ecclesiasticism has been from the highest point of view a failure, and there is a pronounced movement from authority to experience, and a craving for a faith unafraid of scientific progress. Franck blended elements of authority and experience, but Beethoven looked to a higher authority than an obscurantist institution, and found it to be based upon the cumulative experience of mankind. He grasped the fundamental necessity of fusing intellect and soul, that the one may support, and the other uplift; and to all who realise this necessity, Beethoven must be a mighty prophet, revealing all that had lain implicit in Christ's teaching of human brotherhood, and pointing out the broad road to attainment.

But whatever may be the relative value of their respective experiences, we rest profoundly convinced that each of them found by his own path, the affirmation of his faith, that he who sought found, and to him that knocked it was opened.

II

Turning now from the spiritual environment and perceptions of Beethoven and César Franck to the works in which they embodied these perceptions, we realise that not only were they men of keen insight who had something to express, but artists deeply concerned with the actual expression. They were both artists predominantly classical in their conceptions of form; and in his essay on 'Brahms and the Classical Tradition,' Sir Henry Hadow has described the classical composer as 'one who pays the highest regard to his medium, who aims before all things at perfection of phrase and structure, whose ideal is simple beauty, and whose passion the love of style.' Clearly such a statement can only apply in entirety to such a classicist as Mozart, and even he, in his latest days, seems to have added to this particularly 'absolute' aspiration a certain spiritual content. But Beethoven and Franck both had something very positive to say, and much of their greatness lies in their having adapted form to content with the minimum departure from the dignity and lucidity of classical style. But the very fact of their having something to say militated against their adoption of a purely classical structure, for the ultimate goal of the classical composer is beauty, where content and form are one. But beauty, absolute beauty, is always beyond, elusive even to him who pursues beauty for beauty's sake, who feels it is the be-all and the end-all here, and for whom beauty is truth. Such a one is the lover of Mozart, but the poet has told us more, 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'—truth is beauty, and in this turn

of phrase there is enfolded the difference between Mozart and Beethoven. The one sought beauty and disclosed its truth, the other pursued truth and revealed its beauty. For beauty and truth are one only where the two roads meet, and when the day is bright and the horizon clear there is sometimes a keen second of exquisite joy, when we seem to see their meeting.

Beethoven and Franck, and the former particularly because of his explicit enunciation, are inclined to make the more profound appeal, for truth has always been associated with Christianity, whereas beauty as an end in itself has frequently been associated with a pagan outlook. So narrow a view is declining, but there is still a desire among some to derive from music an emotional uplift as remote from religion as from the higher paganism. But when Beethoven came upon the classical style, it was tending, except in the hands of Haydn and Mozart, to become a formula. Beethoven had to infuse a new vitality, and he did it by humanising the intellectual and spiritual aspiration to beauty, just when it was in danger of becoming too rarefied and of losing itself in the vacuousness of illimitable space. He introduced an element of emotion such as is inseparable from profound conviction, replaced conventional wit by spontaneous humour, and grace by majesty. His structural adaptations jarred one by one on the sensibilities of his hearer, but they ceased only with his death; and now we can see that he entirely transformed the Mozartian sonata form, yet left unimpaired its fundamental principle of clearly defined contrast of movements. The noblest example of this, the Fifth Symphony, embodied many of his changes, but it has withstood the wolfings of hungry criticism and now scarcely feels the impotent pecking of academic bills. The fulfilment of his blended spiritual and artistic aim culminated in the Choral Symphony, and up to the moment of its completion, he had been mainly concerned with the sonata form, but the latest quartets and sonatas reveal a constant attention to two other great forms, the variation and the fugue, while there is found a cyclical treatment based on melodic, harmonic and rhythmic relations. And here it is, in these latest innovations, that Vincent D'Indy saw the beginning of the road his master trod.

Beethoven, the noble outcome of classic force, who began by writing purely formal symphonic works, before he won the place of a genius in the upward progress of his art, marked out by the works of his third period (1815-1827) a new road, and although he himself did not travel far along it, he left it open for such of his successors as were endowed with a sufficiently robust temperament to force their way along it, knowing also how to avoid the dangers they might encounter.

The question involved no less than the transformation, or rather the renovation, of the sonata form, that admirable basis of all

symphonic art which had been accepted by all musicians from the seventeenth century onward by virtue of its harmonious logic. Beethoven indicated the manner of this renovation, somewhat unconsciously perhaps, but not the less surely, by associating with the architectural plan of the sonata two other forms which had, so far, been essentially divided from it.

One, namely the *fugue*, had enjoyed, with J. S. Bach and his predecessors and contemporaries, a moment of ineffable splendour; the other, the great *variation-form*—which, let me say at once, has nothing in common with the 'theme and variations' ('*thème varié*') which was the joy of Haydn's audiences, and the despair of pianists of the romantic school—had already been anticipated by that universal spirit, J. S. Bach, and in a few very rare instances by some other composers.

These two forms, traditional perhaps, but from which the vitality appeared to be gradually ebbing away, were employed by Beethoven to revivify the languishing form of the sonata, and this was the point of departure of a new system of musical structure which was, however, solidly based upon classical tradition.

Now when Beethoven had built up his faith in the freedom of mankind, when he had completed the comprehensive synthesis, he turned in upon himself and explored subjectively the implications of his faith; he employed, quite naturally, two forms which are fundamentally analytic, the fugue and the grand variation, and he unified the aspects of his contemplation by elements of a cyclical treatment. Then came Franck some years later with an objective faith subjectively justified, and a spiritual process broadly consonant with that of Beethoven in his last years. Naturally, he too used analytical forms to investigate the faith he had received, and developed sonata form on these new lines. But Brahms, whose spiritual outlook was somewhat akin to that of Beethoven before those last years, preserved the essentials of sonata form, or as d'Indy prefers, continued sonata form, while César Franck developed it. But it is not impossible to opine that Franck developed away from it, and by destroying the contrast of movements, approached a form of monologue and took a step from symphony to symphonic poem.

Few composers of high standing have written so much that is unworthy as did Franck, but neglecting this dross, we may single out both from his works and those of Beethoven, the ones which have immediate bearing on spiritual development. With the others we are not concerned here, except perhaps to mention 'Psyche' where the Christian symbolism that Franck found in the classical myth serves rather to indicate that his faith was at times more an obsession than a possession, than to vindicate any originality of treatment. But reverting to the works of profounder meaning, Beethoven's progress

to affirmation seems to halt briefly on three succeeding peaks of attainment, the Third, Fifth and Ninth Symphonies. The Third represents the first phase of his belief in the goodness of a freed mankind. It was written when French revolutionary ideas pervaded Europe, and at a time when Beethoven was still regarding Buonaparte as a hero and deliverer. Consequently his thought was of a political and social freedom, a freedom born of justice and equality, and the spiritual aspect of a heroism by which this was to be accomplished he enshrined in the *Eroica*. But by the time he wrote his Fifth Symphony he had been disillusioned and fetters were again clinging to man, but there was still a freedom within his grasp, a freedom of will. And it is the essence of the conflicts of free will which he expresses in the Fifth Symphony. Whether or not we attach any significance to his specific mention of fate in connection with the opening phrase, there is little doubt that his Europe must have seemed in the hands of a fate, a fate that had inflicted the defeats of Ulm and Austerlitz, Jena, Auerstädt and Friedland in twenty months. And even ignoring this fateful environment, one must remember he had reached that period of his life comparable to Shakespeare's tragic period, and quite apart from that he was undergoing an intellectual and spiritual evolution which was bound some day to bring him face to face with the idea of fate. But fate is not a spiritual conception, it is not a source of strength, but a confession of weakness, and it offers an explanation only to those who will not look beyond it, but denies that fundamental freedom for which Beethoven was seeking. So he met this unspiritual antagonist and vindicated the freedom of his will. After three symphonies of joy such as one might expect after such a triumph, came the last, the Ninth, perhaps the most comprehensive utterance ever made by man. Sixteen years after the Fifth, and ten after the Eighth Symphony, it came when his outlook was matured, his soul revealed and his experience garnered. And then he surveyed the whole scene of life, its decisions and conflicts, its moments of abysmal darkness, the holiness of dawning light, and the transcending joy of affirmation. Can one wonder that the sonata form was suited to the embodiment of his experience? It allowed him to build up and express vividly each phase of the problem he was facing; it was a synthetic structure with synthetic content.

Franck's most significant works were written in the latest period of his life, and even had he built up a faith we should be unable to trace the stages. But his life and his works tell us that he received a faith, and his entire spiritual process was the passage from doubt to certainty. It is a state revealed in most of his best works, and the differences between them exist not in problem but in musical presen-

consistent with doubt, but how different is that opening theme from the one which bursts from the mysteriously pregnant introduction of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. And then how consonant is the interweaving of the slow movement and scherzo with the outlook that has never known the blackness of despair, nor the almost blinding glory of sudden realisation, and how remote that delicate scherzo theme from the headlong, frantic rush of Beethoven's second movement. Finally, there is that cyclical weaving of themes binding the last movement to those which had preceded it, and wholly different from the reminiscences of the past that Beethoven incorporated in the choral finale. There seems no shadow of doubt that in broad manipulation of symphonic form, both Beethoven and Franck worked primarily at the dictate of their inner experience, and theme by theme we can see contrasted the spiritual adventurer and the spiritual home-lover, the character of



and of



And so, in this comparison of Franck and Beethoven, we see how close each was to his environment, how they fused the aspirations of their spiritual insight and artistic genius, how the derivation and development of Franck from Beethoven may be more fully understood on spiritual than on purely musical considerations, and finally, how they showed that by the most diverse routes men may attain what alone is wholly worth attaining, a living faith.

R. V. DAWSON.

EMOTION AND MORALS IN GREEK MUSIC

GREEK music is one of the things about which English people nurse a secret passion.

They would not admit it, of course, but English musicians have always had about the someday-to-be-discovered wonders of the music of Hellas a romantic feeling which is suffering a deep disappointment over the repeated failure of learned research to bring to light anything which fulfils their expectations. They have always been hoping that something in music equivalent to the Hermes of Praxiteles in statues would come to light and make us all feel happy with that I-told-you-so feeling; and it really is painful to admit, as Professor Dent puts it, that 'music is the one branch of Greek art which makes no emotional appeal to us at the present day.' We really cannot bear to think that with all the other things in which we feel our response to the Greek spirit, music should be the one form of Greek art which brings us no message.

A survey by R. P. Winnington Ingram⁽¹⁾ of recent research does not do much to revive these fond hopes. It is stones rather than bread that we find placed upon the table, and the writer concludes his article by saying that 'although further fragments are likely to turn up, there is little hope that they will be in better preservation than those we possess, or that they will date back to that early period about which we are naturally most curious'; but he sums up the position as follows:—

The scholar may reasonably expect by careful study to eliminate apparent contradictions and form hypotheses which will give an intelligible history of Greek *musical theory*; but the only desire of the musician is to understand *Greek music as an art*—to find in it a language for the expression of human emotion.

The scholar may reasonably hope to be satisfied. The musician, with his desire, with his human longing for a living contact, fears that he is to be turned away.

There speaks the disappointment which has had to confess that Greek music as at present revealed is the only form of Greek art which leaves us cold—which seems to us to voice no emotion.

(1) In *MUSIC AND LETTERS*, October, 1929.

as it certainly arouses none; yet we want—we still passionately, though perhaps secretly, want—to discover it as 'a language of human emotion.'

A very natural desire; but are we right to suppose that music to the Greeks of the early period was a language for their emotions? What if we are on a false track in expecting them to have regarded it as a vehicle for emotional expression?

I venture to think that in taking for granted that the Greeks tried to express their own emotions—to express *themselves*—in music, we are reading our own present-day attitude of mind into theirs without justification. It is, as I have said, natural that we should suppose the Greeks to have used music as a medium of self-expression, because music with us has come more and more to be regarded in that light, and musicians of recent generations have been forced to seek in this aspect of music the justification for their own preoccupation with it. But to attribute such a conception of music to the Greek mind is to misunderstand human evolution. The Greeks were not hag-ridden as we moderns are with the desire for *self-expression*. That was not their idea of art of any kind. They were not conscious of self in the way that human beings of to-day are. But this is not to say that they were lacking in emotion. Far from it. Only we must not fall into the mistake of referring to the emotions and the self as if they were one and the same thing. The self is what feels; the emotions are that which is felt. The self feels emotions and thinks thoughts, and is at first swept hither and thither by emotions and kept in bondage by thought, but by degrees becomes capable of controlling the one and finding freedom in the other.

Now the early Greeks knew a great deal about emotion, but very little about self. They were the prey of emotion and the prisoners of thought; and the lesson which their race had to learn was self-control. They had to learn how to distinguish the self from its emotions—to see that there was a something which could be drawn out of the whirlpool.

The teaching of this was first brought to them by the drama.

The watching of a Greek tragedy was no matter of haphazard attendance. It was an incredibly solemn performance, hedged round with ceremony, portentous, authoritative; taking place in the presence of the High Priest and overhung with an awe-inspiring religious atmosphere. What was the object? It was to teach the facing of emotion—to objectify emotional struggle.

The solemnity with which the drama was regarded in Greek education can only be understood when we realise that it originated at a

time when man had not learned to look at himself—to recognise a something in him which could

rise from disaster and defeat
The stronger.

External conflict the man of those days understood: fighting man to man, or man to beast, he understood. But internal struggle and development had to be made real to him; and the way this was done was by putting him on the stage and making him look at himself—making him watch man under stress, under mental conflict, wrestling with inward problems. The great figures of the tragedies were put before the Greek to objectify his inner experiences, all confused and overwhelming as they were, to make him realise his need of self-knowledge; and the great figures were masked, to teach him his need of self-control—masked, too, that the sight of an actor's personality might not confuse the issue.

In a later age, the same teaching came to them in a subtler form. The great age of the drama, having fulfilled its purpose, entered upon its inevitable decline, and was succeeded by the Socratic Dialogue, of which the whole purpose is to make man look *inward* and behold his own thoughts upon the stage of his mind.

Now Plato treats of music in a number of passages in the Dialogues, and it is clear that he is looking back to an enlightened past and seeing that the Greeks of his day have come very far away from the original purity of the idea of music. He also knew—what is so hard for us to realise—that people had not, so far, thought about music in the abstract. They had accepted it: they had not analysed its effects or expressed themselves about it. So now Plato is going to make them search into music and its implications, into themselves and their relation to music, and the famous passage in *The Republic* on the place of music in education is a survey of musical abuses—a condemnation of its misuse as an excitant and as a narcotic—the intention being to purge both music and men of these decadent influences and to restore music to its rightful place as the chief harmoniser of life. Music and men, Socrates perceives, have become all confused and weakened with emotional expression. Men have got a wrong idea of music. He sees that his countrymen's great weakness is in lack of self-control, and he sees that the true function of music is to control the unruly, untidy emotional nature in man, to tune it to the divinely intended temperance. He depicts his ideal citizen as one who does not give way to lamentation under grief. What need, then, shall we have of those kinds of music which express lamentation? Drunkenness and softness will be utterly foreign to

him: let us then have no more of those relaxed kinds of music which induce sluggishness and feebleness of purpose. Two kinds of music only, says Socrates, will be needed. 'I want to have one warlike, to sound the note which a brave man utters; and another to be used in the mood of peace. Leave me just these two strains—the strain of necessity and the strain of freedom; the strain of courage and the strain of temperance: these, I say, leave.'

There is not much encouragement in this for *self-expression*. It is self which music is to control.

And here, perhaps, we have the clue to the vexed question of Ethos—the moral value of music—the notion of which has been so beloved by the sentimentalists and so loathed by the learned. If we understand Plato's view that music should be valued as the controller of emotionalism—of those feelings which upset a man's clear judgment, of all that lower, stupid, lazy self which hampers the higher self—if we understand that, we shall not expect to find that it was an acceptable view to his countrymen: we shall not be surprised to find that it was speedily challenged, that it gradually took on garbled forms, and that by the time of Aristoxenos, writer of the earliest treatise extant on Greek music, 'ethos' has come to mean, not absolute moral value in any actual music, but the appropriateness of a combination of mode, genus and rhythm in the treatment of a given subject. Clearly there has been a spiritual shrinkage which has reflected itself in poverty of material resource, for the subsequent history of the Greek 'modes' shows a gradual stultification. The rich and sensitive enharmonic of Plato's time is succeeded by the more limiting chromatic, and that again by the prosaic diatonic; until with the martyrdom of Saint Cecilia of Rome, the soul of Greek music may be said to have perished. The corpse was finally embalmed and enshrined in the ecclesiastical modes.

Music, as we know it, has come into being since then. It has climbed slowly and, at times, painfully, out of a tomb, and to-day seems exhausted by the effort. What will give it the needed new vitality? Perhaps our present longing to justify the Greeks as musicians is an emotion which will bring us into touch with their sources of inspiration and their *ethos*.

KATHARINE E. EGGAR.

THE MUSICAL PRESS IN ENGLAND TO-DAY

THE springs of musical enthusiasm in England appear to be unfathomable. The current wells up in all manner of unexpected places, till, could one take the sum of it as a mathematical unit, it would be found far greater than that of many countries where the State both recognises and assists musical activity. But there is no doubt that much of the natural force of our national instinct for music is lost through mishandling and lack of direction. Where can the guiding hand be found? Passing over as inadequate our spasmodic attempts at self-organisation, we are forced in the end to pause upon the musical criticism of the day.

It is of some interest, therefore, at one time or another to consider what that current musical criticism is, of what it consists and how it fulfils its ideal or any proper function as a vital organ in our musical body. One may look around in vain for a comprehensive critical review of musical criticism: so helpful a thing seems not to exist either on paper or in the minds of other musicians. We all talk of the critics; their name is on every tongue: they amuse, annoy, advertise us, but they do not apparently inspire us to keep in readiness a reasoned opinion of their relation to the musical polity.

With gratitude one recalls that there is not to-day a crying need for such an investigation as there was in 1894 when Sir Henry Hadow set himself to the unpleasant task. Indeed every working critic amongst us is the child of that essay, which, having effectually performed its lesser function almost immediately upon publication, has perhaps only now begun to fulfil its greater—that of setting a permanent critical standard which it is doubtful if any future generation will be able to overthrow in favour of a higher ideal. The exposition stands, like a rock, for all time. The application of its clearly stated principles to the needs of the day and to the practice of living writers is principally what the enquirer must seek. Present circumstances make it no ill moment for undertaking a stationary survey, or in Mr. Bernard Gilbert's better words a 'God's eye view,' of this composite and moving object, even if one would find difficulty in justifying this moment as more apt than a year ago or a year hence; but the disappearance of one musical magazine in the recent autumn and the almost simultaneous publication of two others (both with

pleasantly assured circulations) offer a pressing excuse for a task which might otherwise be laid aside till a fitter day arrived—which, with all such tasks, we know will never come.

What, then, are the special circumstances that characterise the present musical age in England? They are three. The first is that irrepressible enthusiasm for music to which reference has already been made. Only the superficial and ignorant observer could accept simple external conditions, like the absence of a State-aided opera, or the innate conservatism of our public programmes, or the peculiar economics of our orchestral concerts, as evidence sufficient to influence a judgment on a nation's desire for music. To know the English as a musical nation is to have seen the quantity of individual effort, the quality of the interest taken in music in obscure places and under adverse conditions, the strength of the desire for music that fights, and wins, against systems and circumstances which are almost overwhelming. We have to gauge what help our criticism in its most beneficent function has given to this native musical effort.

The second is the sudden incursion into music of the reproducing machine, a simple acoustical improvement which has had far-reaching results of a very different kind from those anticipated by the scientific minds of its inventors. From the start, of course, it could hardly be overlooked that the gramophone would provide music ready-made for those whose lack of ability, or of perseverance, rendered impossible the personal making of music—fount of all musical 'appreciation.' But only a prophet could have foretold with what rapidity and success the commercial possibilities of this new musical toy would be exploited. It was the gramophone that began the all-too-conscious movement of 'music for all'—without allowing for the fact that music had really acquired no added universality by the agency of this mechanism. It introduced among the many a carefully fostered zest for music of the special reproduced kind. It brought a gambling element, a connection with world markets and stocks and shares, which made the wide interests of the German publishers appear Liliputian, and which, indeed, unlike the parallel commercial ventures of the publishers, had no connection with the tradition of printing or scholarship. Most significant of all, it imported into music a burning enthusiasm which was only by chance associated with music—the enthusiasm for success, finance, power; for it is obviously the unmusical members of the directorates of these companies who are most keen for the sale of their own kinds of music; who indeed have by means of the musicians raised this elaborate structure of propaganda for the 'listener.'

Having thrown wide open the door, hitherto but standing ajar, for

the entry of American methods of amusement, the gramophone has brought to the minds of the public this most serious confusion between music as an art of expression and music as a form of incidental entertainment. Finally, into the well-prepared ears of an immense public comes the sound of music broadcast—a dangerously specious form of musical dissemination since, while purporting to give music as it is, at the same time it gives the listener no opportunity of testing its faithfulness to the original compositions or to its announced performers, or how much the music is altered (by 'control,' for example) on its flight from instrument to receiver. In England the creation of a State monopoly has made as many difficulties as it has solved. Being without a competitor, the British Broadcasting Corporation unwittingly sets for itself an absolute standard, which demands of its assessors a similarly absolute standard of judgment. Our enquiry is how musical criticism has treated the problem of reproduced music, the results of its commercial exploitation, the arrival of the largest concert-giving agency ever known in musical history: what it has done to guide these forces towards a purely musical goal.

The third circumstance distinguishing present from past is the radical difference in our ideals of composition from those which actuated the older masters. The situation which the new music has created in England to-day is more complicated than the parallel period of Wagnerism, for two reasons—the first, that the changes in musical material and thought are more fundamental than those of Wagner's reaction against the formalities of classicism, as well as being more diverse in character and country of origin; the second, that simultaneously with the rise of the new music in almost every civilised country has occurred a revival in English composition almost unprecedented in its suddenness, rapidity, and comprehensiveness. A new school has established itself on a thoroughly permanent footing within the space of thirty years. Has musical criticism, we must ask, aided or hindered the inevitable progress of the new ideals in music; has it been a friend or a caviller with the new English school—or has it been negligible; has its function been creative or merely commentary; what has it done to link up the activities of national and foreigner, and to bridge over that great gap of the Channel which is the most serious barrier to English musical success?

To answer these questions by historical testimony would entail the compilation of a volume of quotations; and to rely on verbal opinion only would be both inaccurate and invidious. There remains only the empirical method, supported in part by an examination of the existing practices of published musical criticism at the present day.

It is submitted as an answer to the first question that current

musical criticism is too much concerned with the outside of the cup and platter, which are decidedly unpromising in appearance, and that it therefore devotes insufficient attention to the real needs of the country at this time. It would, for example, be difficult for any one ignorant of musical England to derive a just estimate of her value from the daily, weekly, or musical press; yet, it is important to realise, the great majority of readers of criticism are thus ignorant and need a leader in their knowledge as well as in their opinions.

To the second question the answer is no less discouraging. The prevailing attitude of musical criticism towards the reproducing companies has largely been one of acquiescence and even gratitude. The musical dangers of the vast commerce are practically never discussed; the words and the records of the companies are equally accepted as the best possible before the millennium; the B.B.C. remains unchastened, its possibilities for good unimagined, its manifest compromises unnoticed. Finally, there appears to be no sense of the necessity by hard or encouraging words to lead those who rule the musical mechanisms towards a standard of which they have hitherto had no idea, a standard which, however, is a postulate of all other musical effort.

It has long been apparent, in the third place, that the public is more receptive of new music than the critics are. Indeed, works have had popular success during the very period when official criticism was condemning their sanity. This is as true of the recent past as it is of the present; Bartók suffers precisely as Debussy did, and the extraordinary concentration on manner rather than matter still persists. A quotation of February, 1929, that one type of composer finds his knowledge of older works 'a deterrent' and tries to 'shun those ways' finds a parallel misjudgment in every decade from to-day to Artusi, each one mistaking alike the point of view of the creative artist. Musical criticism in England, with the exception of a lone few who have always, in one individuality or another, existed, has never come round to a normal acceptance of modern music. The universal change of idiom is still regarded as a phenomenon, a temporary peculiarity, to be measured entirely by its dissimilarity with the past, and this is true not only of those critics who were established in mental habits before the changes penetrated across our barriers, but also of the younger generation. New music is still received with fear rather than with interest, with astonishment rather than with perception, is condemned rather than expounded. Criticism has done little to establish living composers in their rightful places. It has hindered more than helped the English movement—forgetting, for example, that to revile, even though perhaps truly, is sometimes

neither just nor creative. (Point to a book on the subject which can deny this.) Finally, by seldom passing our frontiers itself, by continually referring to the English composer as if he were of a different kind from the composers of other nations (almost as if he were a performing animal), and by a too frequent interest in those English artists who make their success abroad by virtuosity and use it for themselves and not for the English cause, musical criticism has not yet earned our gratitude for helping to restore England to what knowledge can show is its proper status among the musical nations.

However refutable these opinions may appear, an examination of the system of musical criticism to-day lends them some probability and, at the same time, at least partly explains the causes of the complaints. For these causes, it is clear, could not, without an unimaginable series of coincidences, be identified with a mere list of the musical critics of the last thirty years, any more than the solution to the problem could be found in a pogrom. It is the system or the means of criticism that is at fault. What are these means? They embrace lectures, books, contributions to the lay press, and contributions to the musical press. Lectures remaining unprinted, save in one of the other three forms, may be omitted from the discussion, and we will turn our attention first to the lay press.

It is an interesting fact, but one that gives no indication of an average daily standard, that some of the most illuminating essays on music of our time have appeared in the serious lay papers. On the other hand, the general rule of the reviews is to pay scanty attention to music—the *London Mercury*, for example, giving it a very occasional 'chronicle,' while films, the drama, and even typography have monthly attention. The *Queen* has lapsed into silence after a long spell; the *New Statesman* offers an outlet for the opinions of one man; the *Nation* has less now than ever before and far less than its component part, the *Athenæum*, used, and the *Spectator* clearly does not consider music an art worthy to stand beside, say, biography.

Most of the larger newspapers give permanent posts to one or more critics, some of whom have to 'cover' other subjects as well—art, the drama, literature, news, cricket, even—it is said—the woman's page. The editorial attitude towards music is a grudging one of surprise that there should be—it must be only temporary—so wide an interest in the subject. With what precise object they employ a musical critic at all remains a mystery: in part, it is an action that represents a compromise between something and nothing; the editor cannot be accused of neglecting culture or of offending by omission some person dear to a public of his own. Yet there must be left ample space for all those supremely important items that make our

papers sufficiently big to carry the right number of advertisements. Every contribution must therefore find an excuse to be allowed to appear—it must be a 'news item' and relate to some particular event, and the editor by means of his 'subs' reserves the right to alter, cut, or omit whatever matter is submitted, without hope of redress.

A London daily recently employed a musician to contribute a weekly column on music, in which, however, he was not allowed to refer to any past events. As it is probably unfair and certainly libellous to comment unfavourably on a forthcoming concert, the critic's only means of expressing his views was the selecting of the items to announce. The absurdity of this example makes it memorable, but is it much more exaggerated than the system of any London newspaper—of one, for example, that employs a critic who happens also to be a publicity agent? That is surely clear proof that criticism, as criticism, does not constitute a factor in editorial policy.

The fallacy of the 'news interest' can also be demonstrated by the way every professional critic simultaneously wrote of Beethoven and Schubert during their centenaries and of Delius during the Festival. The interesting point, of course, is how little they wrote of them both before and after.

The so-called musical critic, then, is expected to 'cover' the concerts, that is, to give an interesting account of them. There are a good many concerts in London, and so several have to be visited—at least nominally—in the course of one afternoon or evening, and each must be written about in one way or another. The critic may be expert in singing or piano, or ignorant of both—he must do the shows he is sent to. But it does not matter because no critical standard is exacted of him and no one cares if he is wrong. It is just news, and, unfortunately, the omission of a 'notice' of any concert from a paper is very often taken to be a more critical treatment of the concert than the faint praises of a poor review. So much is this true that the concert notice is expected by the artist, and performers (both English and foreign), agents, and those who give advice to the young talk unblushingly about giving a London recital at a heavy loss (because no one wants to go to it) in order to 'get the notices,' to be quoted in some mutilated form as an inducement to the less wise provincial or foreigner to pay for the same services that the artist has presented free to the poor critics. Here, too, occurs the opportunity for snobbery—that deadliest form of musical corruption.

The writers themselves, on the other hand, at some late hour of the night, must make up their minds what they think, or, at least, what they are going to say. Small wonder that concert notices often read like an enlarged version of a programme (they would be better if they

attempted no more), that they frequently betray evidence of a temporary inconvenience rather than a permanent standard, and that the opinions, if any are given or allowed to appear in print, are worthless either individually or taken as the sum of a life's work. For the 'opinions' must be made quickly, without investigation, and recorded immediately, without regard to style. A new work in an unfamiliar idiom, played from manuscript, must be treated by the same man who has just heard an ex-student sing half a programme of familiar vocal works. Is it to be wondered at that such opinions are made to be forgotten? It is certain at least that few professional critics would like to be confronted with their first opinions of works they have later found it policy to praise.

The circumstances of the provincial papers make their systems slightly different. There are fewer concerts and more space to devote to them: events in London are 'covered' by telegrams from a representative, who very probably 'syndicates' (as the phrase goes) his report to a number of scattered journals. The finest concert notices of the day were undoubtedly those of the late Samuel Langford in the *Manchester Guardian*; but it says no good word for an obviously ridiculous system that this fine musical mind should have spent itself on nothing but daily journalism, and is now lost to the world leaving no better record than a memorial volume made out of those night-written columns.

Certain dailies, both in London and the provinces, offer to the public eye, in addition to concert reports, occasional articles on music—some as 'stunts' ('Is Jazz Dead?' and that kind of thing), some as a weekly feature. But a glance at the list is not very encouraging, few of them printing much in the nature of serious criticism (how should they?), and nearly all in each paper coming from the same source weekly and thus representing but one point of view. This applies, but with better results, to the two weekly papers which appear (so to speak) in morning dress, the *Observer* and the *Sunday Times*; but after many years, the set form of an article, followed by concert notices, by a familiar writer (his devil doing the duller ones) has become fatiguing. In addition, two papers print a regular weekly musical page, usually consisting of three columns surrounded by advertisements. One, the *Daily Telegraph*, here publishes contributions from critics not on the staff, with a news column in the centre and sometimes reviews of published music. Alas, the sum total of this commendable effort is not very great, and it would not be unfair to describe it as a good opportunity wasted. The other, the *Evening Standard*, is a composite column of notes by the regular critic of the paper, and though a new venture, has not yet contributed much to public knowledge or taste.

Apart from the musical papers, then, this is what the public has to read on music in its ordinary journals at a time when, as has been shown, a lead in musical affairs is a desperate need for the nation. Not only is the concert notice as reading matter dull and uninteresting, but, also, it absorbs such time as the ordinary man cares to devote to musical affairs, and indeed acts, through its inanity, as a deterrent to his half-formed desire to interest himself in a remote subject. The less discerning critics of criticism blame the writers more than the system, and if this is unfair, one cannot be surprised that the profession of criticism offers little inducement to a big man of culture, enthusiasm, and experience. Nor is it astonishing that a really good man finds it hard to get one of these posts. One wonders how the desire to be a critic, as commendable a human ambition as that of the composer, can exist under such stifling conditions. The critic who has the vocation to influence a big public of potential music lovers can lay aside his pen, unless he has first the strength to break down the barriers of ignorance and prejudice which imprison him from contact with his readers.

In the musical journals (there are some twenty in England alone) the scope is wider, but the combined circulations, omitting duplicated names, cannot amount to one quarter the number of purchasers of one London daily; and though some of these twenty journey round the world, their market is specialised and they cater neither for untrained tastes nor for the cultured amateur musician.

The power of the Press, so hopelessly unrealised as a force for music's good by the editor and proprietors, has not been specifically mentioned in our account of the daily journals. From the musical point of view, a more interesting example of opportunity neglected can be found in the two new papers gratuitously foisted upon an unwilling world in the last few months—*A Music Journal*, the combined organ of the Incorporated Society of Musicians and the British Music Society, with an assured circulation (included in the membership subscriptions) of some eight or nine thousand at least, and *Milo*, the official magazine of the Imperial League of Opera, boasting a minimum circulation of fifty thousand copies. It will be interesting to see how these two magazines, bursting unpetitioned into a world waiting for an intelligent guide in musical affairs, have seized their opportunities, which, be it noted, are great enough to whet the appetite of the most hardened journalist, and open up a prospect of paradise for the musical educationalist.

Both papers are distinguished for the unprofessional standard of their journalism; they appear to be run without a sense that other papers ever existed. *A Music Journal*, for all its suggestive title, has

not yet been able to forget its function as a mere conveyer of official information to members of the societies concerned. But the societies are very different in composition, so that each half of the paper is unsuitable to the readers of the other and no attempt at a compromise has been made so far. On the other hand, a great deal of professional wrangling is ventilated in front of an amateur audience, the parallel reports of the amateur society offering but meagre encouragement to the professional musician. The grand total is nil, and the appearance of the paper forewarns the reader. *Milo*, edited by Peter Warlock, is, of course, more provocative. But the Warlock of the old, irresponsible *Sackbut*, had more charm than this Warlock with clipped wings, chained behind the Beecham chariot. Here is propaganda indeed, of no subtle kind, and although we find reversion to type in the inclusion of articles by Sorabji and Cecil Gray, an almost libellous and insufferably unfair caricature, and a quantity of flattering references (by one who has clearly changed his opinions) to Delius, the rest shows neither the expert hand of a broadminded editor nor any of the sense of the responsibility asked of one who must provide musical fodder for a vast and hungry herd—not even a vestige of the sprightly critical mind one has always associated with the editor's work.⁽¹⁾

Two more chances missed! What have we left? The remainder are a curious company. First place must be given to MUSIC AND LETTERS, whose only handicap as an outlet for energetic and serious criticism is its quarterly appearance. But, alas, MUSIC AND LETTERS has not conquered the multitude, to everyone's regret, and, indeed, it comes nearer to the status of the book than the magazine. The *Musical Times*, under its ingenious editor, Mr. Harvey Grace, maintains an attitude of fairness, a whimsical interest, a comprehensiveness and accuracy which combined, are uncanny. No one would suspect it of being a publisher's organ, were it not for the unsuitable supplements of music gratuitously inserted every month—over which, it is obvious, the editor has no control. It is by far the best musical monthly and by far the most general of all, but it remains a professional paper, designed for musicians, giving them their news, their mental outlook expressed, their questions answered, and their problems solved. Six other papers need specific mention: the *Music Teacher* (with satellites), the *Gramophone*, *Musical Opinion*, the *Chesterian*, the *Strad*, and the *Radio Times*.

The *Music Teacher* is an enterprising and deservedly successful paper. It provides for the class indicated in its title and for no other,

(1) It has since been announced that *Milo* is temporarily withdrawn, to be reissued at some later time in a new form.

but its matter, though uneven in quality and outlook, has much that is excellent, particularly in the way of experienced suggestions from well-known teachers, and a good deal that is worth (and receives) preservation. The *Gramophone* is, again, a self-descriptive title; containing some matter of a vaguely provocative kind, it is mainly explanatory and fails by the mild acquiescence of its views to cut much of a figure in the world. A more musical direction would double its value. *Musical Opinion* is a general paper, not unlike the *Musical Times*, but without its brightness and with a distinctly more reactionary point of view. In addition to its ordinary musical pages, there is a section devoted to trade affairs the style of which encroaches too far into the main part of the paper. The *Chesterian*, a small house organ, remains the last survivor of London musical papers—the *Sackbut* (old style), *Fanfare*, the *Dominant*—which have been avowedly sympathetic towards modern music: its Continental circulation makes it rather too important for its contents, which are slight in quantity and uneven in quality. The *Strad* is concerned only with strings and string players: its obvious competence is vitiated by its adherence to a narrow field in the most literal manner; it appears not to recognise that string players, as musicians, must be interested in music, or induced to be, as well as other things, so that it becomes a kind of artistic 'trade journal.' The *Radio Times* has an enormous body of readers: it is a musical paper only so far as it prints the copyright official programmes of the B.B.C. with rather scanty annotations and a proportion of musical articles. Too journalistic to be of much musical account, it yet offers information (if not much in the way of opinion) in no unpalatable form, though its possibilities for good have not yet been explored more than superficially.

Can any one of these journals be honestly accounted a musical paper? That is to say, how much of their contents is devoted to music as an art or even as a science? Which of them are read for their æsthetic opinions and which only for information, and which is expected by a Viennese or French enthusiast as bearing tidings of universal moment? Which can boast of a fame as world-wide as *La Revue Musicale*, *Die Musik*, *La Rassegna Musicale*, *Musikblätter des Anbruch*, *Modern Music*, and other foreign papers, or attempts to assail a similar market? Which can with certainty show that it has influenced a living alien composer for good or ill? The true answer is that our musical journals are much more concerned with the incidentals of music than with music itself, very much as our musical conversation and even our musical life are: how to teach or learn it, what went on in Birmingham or is about to happen in Newcastle, who is the new president of a college or what this other examination syllabus exacts.

England has no purely musical paper, no paper that suggests that music is a universal language, needing perhaps its teachers and scholars and historians, but actually a living language comparable to painting and poetry and philosophy—a medium of intense personal expression: no paper that contributes to the living art of music as practised by artists all over the world.

Let us consider who writes in these papers. The circle of contributors is extraordinarily small, smaller by far than the distinguished list of English musicologists would suggest. The professional critics, of course, appear, but not with great frequency, except in the news departments—concert reports, reviews, etc. A certain number of well-known musicians write casual articles, but few of the highest names appear. The remainder of the matter is provided by unprofessionals of one kind and another, who turn an idle hand towards journalism, often without any special qualifications in music or article-making. The English musical papers, lacking, as they do, any strong and positive policy, are the prey of casual contributions which, if they pass muster, too easily find their way into print. A fluent pen is more often represented than an able mind or a consummate knowledge.

The most significant deduction from a survey of the musical Press is the almost complete divorce between musical journalism and literature of any kind—even literature about music. The musical journals and pages bear the same relation to literary papers and pages of the same class as the provincial operatic stage does to a Granville Barker comedy. The tragedy of musical journalism is that by not touching literature it does not really touch life, and this tragedy is deepened by the existence of at least two forms of fine critical activity in England. The English standard of adjudication and even examination is admitted by all to be high; experience shows it to be incomparably superior in judgment and expression to the commoner and more far-reaching judgments in print. Secondly, there has of late years been an outpouring of books on music of the first order containing not only original research and first-hand criticism, but fine exposition and even fine writing. The works of Hadow, Sanford Terry, Morris, Buck, Dent, Walker, Colles, Fellowes, Heseltine, Gray, Arundell, Grace, the encyclopædic labours of Cobbett and Colles, the programme notes of Tovey, to mention only a few, make the English library on musical subjects of every period and condition the most valuable extant *corpus* of criticism in the world, and have gained it general Continental and American acceptance. Prophetic enthusiasm may see a great future before the new English school of composers, but one may with some certainty predict forthcoming gratitude for the contri-

butions of our country at this period to musical knowledge. The later historian would be horrified if he could know how out of touch was this literature with the daily musical reading of the age, how few even of its writers were giving daily of their best in the cause of music. Yet one of the strongest parts of English musical life is the willingness to assist, by teaching, lecturing, adjudicating, anyhow, in the raising of the general level of musical culture by every musician of importance, the movement reaching its finest point perhaps in the excellent music which all our best composers have written for the young people and students.

So much ingenuity is expended upon our momentary delectation in modern daily journalism that it would be almost an impertinence to suggest a musical course for a practical editor to adopt. Many of our most fertile brains, and even some of our most scholarly, in other spheres, are either collared in youth or exploited in mature fame, to serve (*viâ* an ignorant public) a 'master mind'; and it is an extraordinary thing that the acknowledged presence of music in our everyday life should not have compelled the Press to adopt for this subject the up-to-date tactics it has used for nearly all others. Not every journal has a daily review of yesterday's books: some have a literary page, some a 'feature' article now and then, some even regard books as worthy of the news editor's attention. Our Press still has its internal rivalries—even if they continue to diminish, they will rise again, because there is some life left in journalism. It is this active spark that must be laid to the musical train: it is its very activity that makes it difficult to state one constructive policy. For each paper is different, each must pride itself on dealing with our small sphere as it does with similar small spheres, which together make up our day-to-day existence. One paper might perhaps give a mere list—even with a comment or two—of last night's happenings, one—as *The Times* did so ingeniously not long ago—give a weekly survey of the most important concerts in readable form, another, with a more musical bias, might carefully select (without reference to 'small' advertisements) what concerts deserved a detailed account and employ experts to deal each with his own subject. Yet another might adopt the attitude that a man writes best when he has a subject formed from his own thoughts and encourage a general article from all and sundry—they can be sure that events—too important in our lives—will bear a part in the inspiration. The variety is endless: it is untapped. We mope along in one rut, as prisoners do sowing potatoes. As long as we think in the accepted manner—our familiar trench blocking out the breadth of the sky above us—so long we shall have a musical Press incapable of doing good or ill, costing useless money and gaining thereby the

condemnation of the spenders, finding, too, that the self-imposed fetters grip tighter at every repetition of a familiar movement.

The healthy spirit of service in our musical life is what our criticism lacks; from it could come power to give music, and all its affairs, that lead through difficult places which is so deeply needed to-day. The storms of music are not over, have perhaps not yet reached their climax; one fears the fate of our barque with the helm unattended and the rudder so flimsy. Musical journalism must be brought into line with musical thought and musical literature, and its treatment raised nearer to the plane of the criticism of literature, drama, and art. The system—so stifling, so ruinous to the very interests its promoters think they are serving—must be altered. With Matthew Arnold and Sir Henry Hadow holding their torches before us and an exposition of principles laid clearly out for our inspection by Mr. Calvocoressi—with all our prowess in other branches of musical activity—we must not hesitate to demand a higher standard from our musical press. At present, it has not even the power to damn.

HUBERT J. FOSS.

THE MUSIC OF DITTERSDORF

We are sometimes charmed by hearing an occasional work by Dittersdorf, in his life-time one of the most famous and sought-after of musicians, and we wonder why he should now be so completely on the shelf. For at the outset of his career no young musician was ever better equipped with musical 'parts' than Dittersdorf; his education in the art was sound, and throughout life he had opportunities strewn at his feet—some of which he short-sightedly threw away—such as rarely fell in the way of any musician. As a composer he was prolific, versatile and original, yet he is now but a name. How has this come about, we ask?

Dittersdorf lived at a time when, in spite of its frivolity, earnest men had something more to say than the insincere and elegant trivialities which passed as conversation and thought amongst the feather-brained aristocracy. Music shared in this growing earnestness, the two great pioneers of the century being, of course, Haydn and Mozart. But it was difficult for them to make their voices heard amidst the babel of insincerity which mocked at anything serious, and laughed at any indication of personal feeling. Haydn steered his way with much success. Amidst his light-hearted music were things of deeper import; some of the slow movements in his string quartets especially. Valued and safe with his sympathetic patron, the Prince of Esterhazy, Haydn could do this and not suffer. In the case of Mozart, the results of his deeper thinking were disastrous as far as his worldly estate went. Few understood his music; it was deemed 'melancholy' and 'incomprehensible.' An Italian publisher returned his scores as 'full of mistakes,' 'Too strong meat for the teeth of my Viennese,' said the Emperor to him over 'Don Giovanni.' The opera fell flat at Vienna, and Mozart became worse off than ever.

With a mind at once versatile and shallow, Dittersdorf was born to succeed in the atmosphere of courts and amidst the 'intellectual mediocrity of the artistic bourgeoisie, whose god he was,' says his biographer, K. Krebs.⁽¹⁾ Dittersdorf troubled himself with nothing more than mastering the approved musical conditions of the day; he understood nothing of Gluck's operatic reforms, and of the greatness of Mozart he had no idea, although he was in intimate personal touch

(1) *Dittersdorfiana*, with thematic catalogue, Berlin, 1900.

with him, playing at the first trials of the string quartets dedicated to Haydn held at Mozart's house. Alas! his ears and intellect alike were closed to the sounds of the coming revolution, not only amongst nations, but also in the world of music. With his outward ear, no doubt, he heard, but the message did not penetrate; he did not understand. Buried at country courts, contented, in spite of successful but fleeting visits to Vienna and elsewhere, with his easy achievements, he naturally had no incentive, or desire, to change, nor to adopt a style which must have appeared to him both incomprehensible and fruitless.

Fond of outward show, dress, rank and everything which pertained to social distinction, Dittersdorf imbued his music with the same easy elegance and shallow beauty he had around him; it was the music of courts, designed to please courts and it thoroughly succeeded. 'The elegant company who upheld a chapel,' says Krebs, 'would have been greatly surprised if the orchestra had discoursed to them of personal joy or sorrow in music.' And Dittersdorf endeavoured never to give them cause for such amazement. Hence the fact that the greater part of his music has hopelessly dated, and is now no more than a relic of interest to musical pedants. He evidently feared boring his audience, and rarely gave it a pure adagio. Whenever he does introduce a slow movement, it is as a short introduction, or as an alternative to a quick one. His *tempi* instructions qualify the adagio with such dwarfing directions as 'piu tosto Andantino,' or 'non molto,' or he multiplies his notes so as to give the impression of swifter movement. It would be going too far to say such devices never occurred to Haydn or Mozart, but neither of these great masters ever made apologies for their profound and poetic slow movements.

A programme appealed to Dittersdorf, as in a measure it did to Haydn, but whereas Haydn never allows his programme to obscure the musical idea, Dittersdorf sometimes seems to try to make music play a part which is outside its true domain. In this matter he may well be said here to have taken a leap into the future, for well as he fitted his own generation, we cannot help feeling he would have come into his own, had he lived in these days, in the realm of colour and programmes. He had, undoubtedly, a great feeling for the picturesque and for colour. His striving after the pictorial is found strongly marked in the long series of symphonies—there were 80 of them—on Ovid's 'Metamorphosis'; but Krebs, who has made a thorough examination of the works of Dittersdorf, that is to say of those which remain to us, for an astonishing number of them have been lost, finds the same characteristics in other symphonic works, thus proving Dittersdorf's idiosyncrasy was not confined to compositions in which

he had an avowed programme. In the 'Metamorphosis' series, he sets sentiment on one side in his endeavour to give realism to the subjects and attempts to imitate the sounds of nature and other things. Thus in 'Phaëton,' the rolling of the Sun Chariot and the flash of lightning are portrayed; in 'Acteon,' the hunting-horns and baying of hounds; in 'Diana,' the murmuring of brooks. In the scene where the peasants are changed into frogs, Dittersdorf cannot refrain from representing the croaking and hopping of these creatures. But clever as such programme music may be, it is rarely long-lived; we can see that in our own time in the diminution of the interest which great symphonic poems once aroused. There must be some more lasting quality in music if it is to outlive fashion.

As a universal medium, Dittersdorf, with his daring colour schemes and imitations, felt the limitations of music rather keenly. Speaking of a scene in his opera 'Ajax et Ulysse,' he says regretfully, 'The composer must admit that neither the colour nor the perfume of flowers can be painted through sound,' and he goes on to suggest that the listener should close his eyes and endeavour through his ears to imagine the gorgeous colouring and the fragrance of a bed of flowers at sunset as represented by a certain *Adagio non molto* (note the 'non molto') in his opera!

Although Dittersdorf had a thoroughly careful training in the composition of music, and worked through the 'Gradus ad Parnassum' of Fux, polyphony and counterpoint did not come easily to him. Comparison with other composers, leaving out such giants as Bach and Handel, shows that Dittersdorf never attained much skill in the art of fugue. This severe form imposed a restraint upon him and he was rarely successful with it. Except for a few fugato passages in his oratorios which are good, his contrapuntal writing is poor. That he could write an effective instrumental solo is proved by the attractive violoncello concerto played last season at the Promenade Concerts, and it is to be regretted so many of his instrumental works have disappeared. For instance, he composed several concertos for the oboe, an instrument for which he is reputed to have been particularly clever with in the matter of solos. Not one of his many oboe concertos remains to show us his skill.

In the domain of chamber music we possess a certain number of string quartets, a few of which are occasionally played, especially one in E♭, a slight work in three movements of a somewhat old-fashioned type. Characteristically it has no slow movement, but (1) Allegro, (2) Minuetto and Trio (called Alternativo by Dittersdorf), and (3) Finale Allegro. All three movements are in the same key. The parts are fairly well distributed, but the bulk of the work falls on the two violins. The modulations are simple, and the music very well

illustrates the facts that he had a 'light steady hand and a pleasant invention with melody related to Haydn's without the same imagination' (Krebs).

But there were moments when some hazy idea seems to have floated through the mind of Dittersdorf that music was capable of something more than elegance, realism or colouring. When these notions fastened upon him he was apt to give expression to them by making use of violent changes, or as Krebs puts it, 'when in a comfortable, chatty rondo suddenly a melancholy Hungarian motif ponderously drops in only to vanish again as suddenly; or when in another movement the principal subject is swerved from A to B \flat by a will-o'-the-wisp half recitative episodal theme, such things were considered by Dittersdorf's contemporaries as too strong in contrast and gave occasion for blame.' Another critic says he found in the works of Dittersdorf 'An unadjustable mixture of serious and comic elements.' Now with all due deference to these two criticisms, it would seem, on the other hand, that swift and so-called 'violent' contrasts have an element of strength and life in them which the smoothly-running elegance of the approved works lack. Alfred Heuss, in his remarkable essay on 'The Demoniacal Element in Mozart's Works,' published some years ago, remarks upon Mozart's power of unexpected contrasts in his smaller as well as in his greater works, saying that 'In this power lies the real greatness of Mozart.' Without, therefore, crediting Dittersdorf with any of the genius of Mozart, or of his mastery over contrasts, and duly allowing that Dittersdorf was not fully awake to the poetic and deeper side of music, we may yet ascribe to him a groping in the right direction which these offending passages indicate, and perhaps it might not be too much to assert that the works containing such passages are those which would now find sympathy if they were brought to performance.

The oratorios of Dittersdorf, which were enormous successes in their day, are simply sacred operas and have little in common with oratorio as we now know it. They were produced with action and scenery. Unison choruses alternating with long recitatives and brilliant arias are the chief constituents of these oratorios. Here and there one comes across a notable movement, but they are rare, and on the whole these works are described as being easily surpassed by those of Hasse and Graun. It seems that Dittersdorf's poor counterpoint and his inability to compose a good polyphonic chorus, in addition to the narrow spiritual bounds in which he conceived his oratorios, caused them to lag behind similar works of men whose natural gifts were not so great as his own.

Turning now to opera, we reach a sphere in which Dittersdorf really shines and excels. That is in light, sparkling comic opera. In

this form of art he has truly left something which counts for posterity, and with his 'Doctor and Apothecary' has laid the foundations of German National Opera. 'Mozart's "Entführung,"' says Krebs, 'was over the heads of his public, and is still above the general public, but Dittersdorf struck a successful note in the "Doctor and Apothecary"—the German opera with a big finale and consisting of a clever combination of the French and Italian operatic styles with German music. This work has become a type, and hundreds of later works depend from this firstling by stronger or weaker threads.'

In these brief words Krebs gives us an excellent idea of the virtues of Dittersdorf successful opera if we are not fortunate enough to be acquainted with it at first hand. At Prince Joseph von Hildburghausen's,⁽²⁾ where he passed his youth, he had the most unique opportunities of imbibing the principles of Italian *opera buffa* and intermezzi. The salient points were not lost upon him, and in his own works he was individual enough to reproduce the virtues of the foreign ones without slavish imitation. Combined with his fresh flow of easy melody, humour, and sense of colour, he produced a living thing. His crescendos and his finales are the two devices in which he shows his dramatic power most markedly. In these he approaches Cimarosa and even Mozart. The first finale in the 'Doctor and Apothecary' is almost as long as that in 'Figaro,' and exhibits the same certainty in grouping, contrast and freedom of expression. The operatic accompaniments offered Dittersdorf plenty of opportunities for indulging his love of the pictorial, and he loses few of them. In consequence his accompaniments are richer in detail and in the use of individual instruments than was customary in the German Singspiel. Besides the usual strings, wood-wind and horns in use at that time, in some of his operas, Dittersdorf employs the big drum, bells, contraffagotto, clarinets, piccolo and trumpets, and he was fond also of giving obbligato parts to the violoncello, oboe or piccolo, should occasion arise.

Thus in opera Dittersdorf is at his best, speaking with a voice which might even yet be heard had he something more human than mere lightness and humour to offer. Lacking this depth, the moment the new voice began to make itself fully heard his reign was over, and he went down under it only to be completely submerged when the nineteenth century dawned and Beethoven and the Romantic composers filled music more than ever with personal thought and expression.

FRANCES O. SOUPER.

⁽²⁾See 'Dittersdorf: His Fame and his Fall.' *Monthly Musical Record*, February, 1929.

BACH'S MUSIC AND CHURCH ACOUSTICS

In Germany 'architecture' in the sense of *Raumkunst*, or the art of enclosed spaces, is closely linked with music. Behind the eighteenth century concert room tradition beginning about 1749⁽¹⁾ there lies the music that had as its home the Lutheran church with its peculiar acoustics.

At the Reformation changes affecting church acoustics were made in two kinds. First, German as a language took its place beside Latin in the office of the church, and secondly, side galleries were added to the churches in addition to the west galleries already existing, so that congregations were increased in proportion to air volume and therefore reverberation was correspondingly shortened.⁽²⁾ Medieval Latin, as a language for song, provides a beautiful series of tones for a Gothic church with a long reverberation; it has massive open vowels with the most delicate consonant divisions; it is homogeneous in its refinement and strength. Consider in the B minor Mass the soprano word *unigenite* and then the shout of *Sanctus* by the whole choir. German, on the other hand, while retaining a grand series of open vowels has in addition a great number of contrasting consonants. Compare in the old carol the words *Puer natus in Bethlehem* with *Ein kind geboren zu Bethlehem*. The latter as a tone sequence is more vivid and more punctuated. All that seems harsh to English ears in the spoken German falls into focus in song or oratory; the language seems to have golden vowels and steel consonants. This is not fanciful. There is a particular sound quality that can be defined as 'carrying power.' It has not to do with intensity or amplitude, but arises from the fact that a particular range of pitch is more audible to the human ear than the rest of the scale. Now sounds having pitch components within that range can be heard better than purer sounds without such pitch components. It is this fact that causes the well-known carrying power of siren noises and explains why a staccato passage on a horn or reed instrument can be heard

(1) A society for secular concerts was founded in Leipzig in that year.

(2) Reverberation—the time taken for a sound to die away in any room after the source has ceased—can be measured in seconds. It varies inversely as the absorbing power and directly as the air volume.

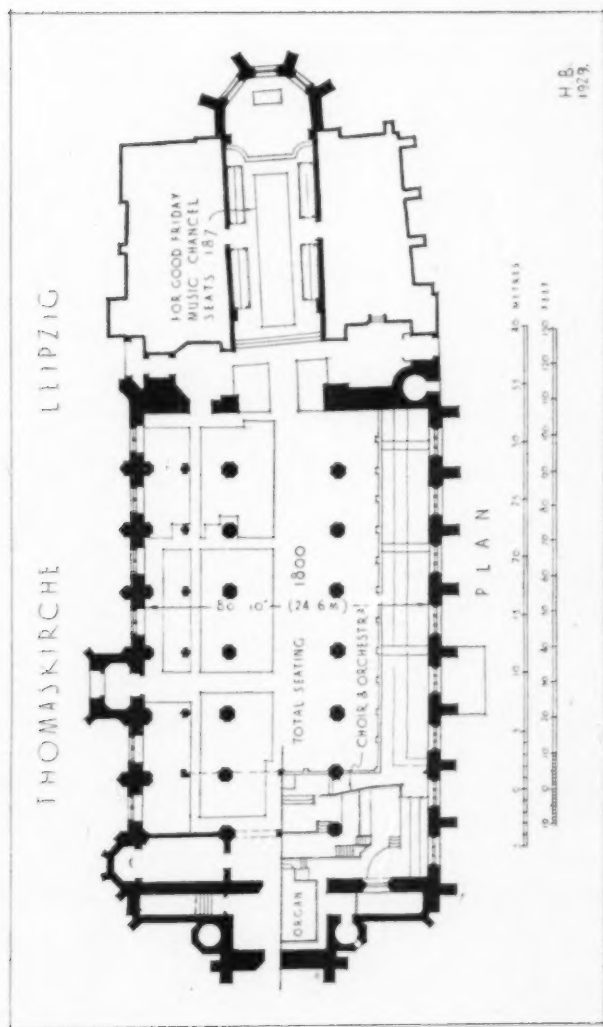


Fig. 1. Leipzig. Plan of the Thomaskirche.

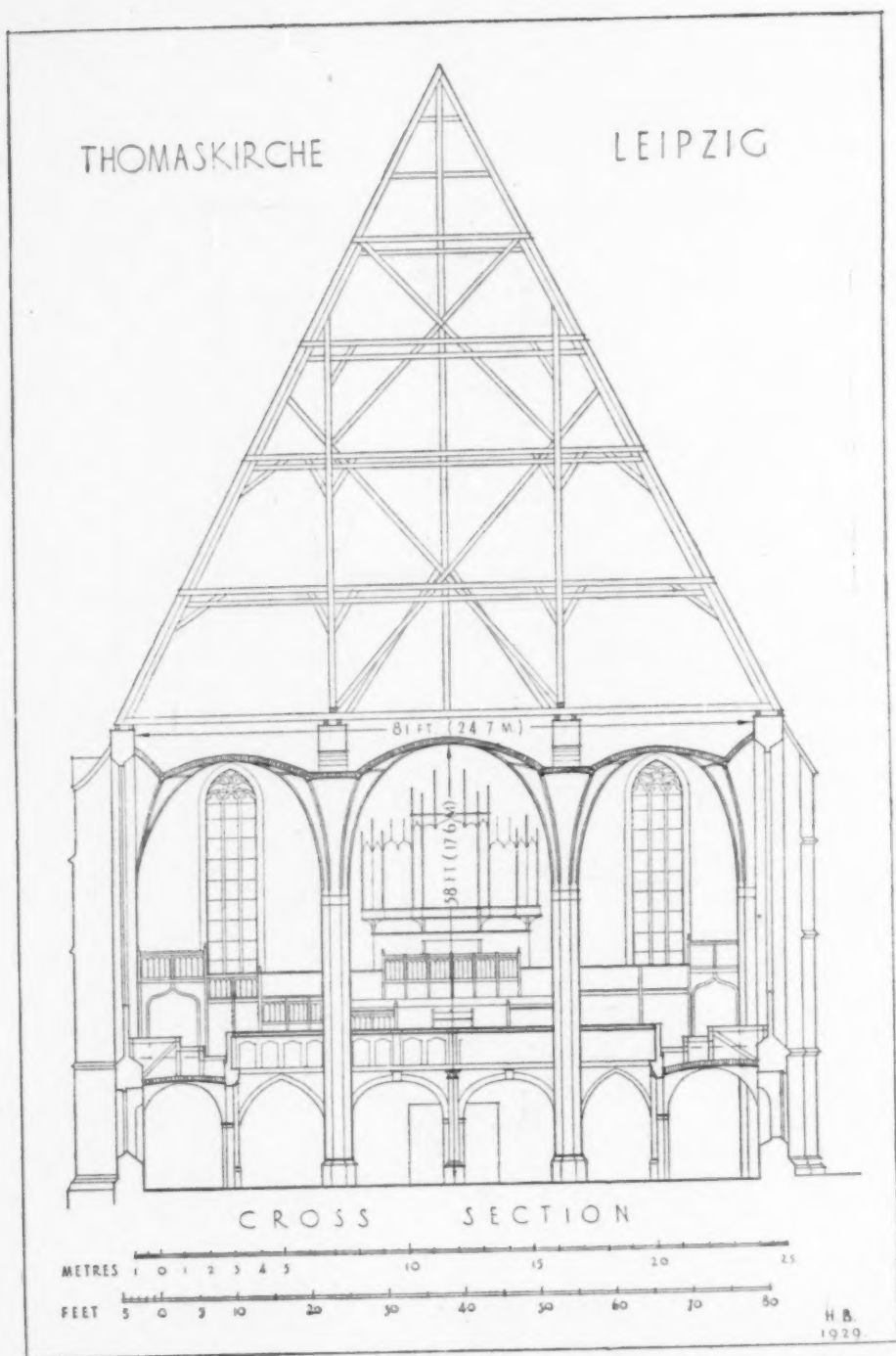


Fig 2. Leipzig. Thomaskirche Cross Section showing West Gallery as existing.

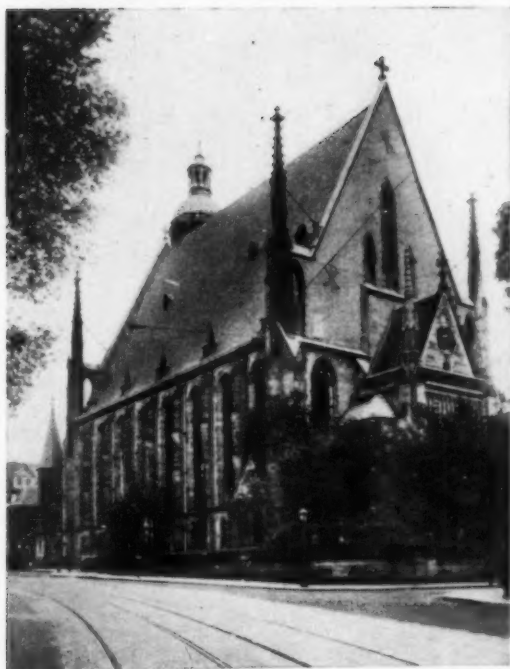


Fig 3. Leipzig. View of the Thomaskirche
from the North West.



Fig. 4. Leipzig. Interior view of the Thomaskirche before the alterations in 1877. (After an engraving in the Stadtmuseum.)

more clearly in a cathedral than the same passage on strings. It is quite possible to impart a reed tone to the voice, as in the case of the Vatican choir, and such a tone increases the audibility of the direct sound besides causing a less reverberation.⁽³⁾ The effect of the German *z* and *sch* sounds is something similar; not only do they carry the sense in a large building but they also modify vowel tones and influence what Byrd calls 'the life of the words.' Thus they have considerable instrumental value and must have contributed to the development of oratorio and cantata in the church.

But Latin was not superseded in the Lutheran church services. Luther, unlike Knox and Cranmer, was a musician, and preserved much of the Holy Office in Latin, namely, Kyrie and Gloria, the Credo, the Horae and Magnificat. 'Latin' and 'Music' were the two important subjects taught in the schools. Latin was the language of manners and of public address, and the monumental Latinity of the German educated classes can be seen, well on into the eighteenth century, in Bach's own letters. This meant that congregation and musicians were accustomed in church to both sets of vowel tones—the German and the Latin—and also that choral works were composed in both. Bach wrote comparatively little to Latin words as compared to German, but that little contains the B minor Mass in which the great Latin choral tradition of the Middle Ages seems to culminate. In Bach's work and in St. Thomas' Church the Latin Mass and the German cantata existed for a while side by side. But the dramatic value of German and also the whole development of orchestral instruments tended to reinforce the cantata and oratorio. Orchestral instruments had invaded the German church probably with the early Gospel or new style motet music, but owing to acoustic causes they were able to remain there and take their place in a rapid co-operative development that culminated in the west gallery of the Thomaskirche under Bach. The orchestral introduction to the cantata was probably the earliest purely orchestral composition.⁽⁴⁾ But in the choruses and hymns the instruments were not mere accompaniments to voices: they were true parts and had to be heard distinctly. The character of Bach's compositions as works of art lies in a close thematic intercourse between voices and instruments. In his double choruses with instrumental accompaniment each voice has a melody, each chorus is complete in itself, the instrumental parts together form a unit and the whole is a grand harmony.

(3) A less reverberation is caused because high pitch-components are relatively more absorbed by ordinary wall surfaces than are low pitch-components; this is shown by the Sabine curves.

(4) Bitter. *Life of Bach*. Abridged translation by J. Kaye Shuttleworth (1873). p. 45.



Fig. 4. Leipzig. Interior view of the Thomaskirche before the alterations in 1877. (After an engraving in the Stadtmuseum.)

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But Latin was not superseded in the Lutheran church services. Luther, unlike Knox and Cranmer, was a musician, and preserved much of the Holy Office in Latin, namely, Kyrie and Gloria, the Credo, the Horae and Magnificat. 'Latin' and 'Music' were the two important subjects taught in the schools. Latin was the language of manners and of public address, and the monumental Latinity of the German educated classes can be seen, well on into the eighteenth century, in Bach's own letters. This meant that congregation and musicians were accustomed in church to both sets of vowel tones—the German and the Latin—and also that choral works were composed in both. Bach wrote comparatively little to Latin words as compared to German, but that little contains the B minor Mass in which the great Latin choral tradition of the Middle Ages seems to culminate. In Bach's work and in St. Thomas' Church the Latin Mass and the German cantata existed for a while side by side. But the dramatic value of German and also the whole development of orchestral instruments tended to reinforce the cantata and oratorio. Orchestral instruments had invaded the German church probably with the early Gospel or new style motet music, but owing to acoustic causes they were able to remain there and take their place in a rapid co-operative development that culminated in the west gallery of the Thomaskirche under Bach. The orchestral introduction to the cantata was probably the earliest purely orchestral composition.⁽⁴⁾ But in the choruses and hymns the instruments were not mere accompaniments to voices: they were true parts and had to be heard distinctly. The character of Bach's compositions as works of art lies in a close thematic intercourse between voices and instruments. In his double choruses with instrumental accompaniment each voice has a melody, each chorus is complete in itself, the instrumental parts together form a unit and the whole is a grand harmony.

(3) A less reverberation is caused because high pitch-components are relatively more absorbed by ordinary wall surfaces than are low pitch-components; this is shown by the Sabine curves.

(4) Bitter. *Life of Bach*. Abridged translation by J. Kaye Shuttleworth (1873). p. 45.

Also instruments were developing technically and were the object of attention. Master musicians were often skilled instrument makers and builders. As an instance of this I can only mention here Bach's own practical craftsmanship in organ building and organ specification, and his designing of new instruments such as his *viola pomposa* and *lute clavicembalo*. The significance of this is that instrument makers, especially organ builders, inevitably acquire some knowledge of room acoustics, and Bach himself had a reputation in this respect. On a visit to the Berlin Opera House in 1747 he is said to have remarked upon the whispering gallery of the *salon* and foretold its effects.

That Bach was sensitive to acoustics is also suggested by Dr. Sanford Terry as a reason for his strong preference for the Thomas-kirche as compared to the Nicolaikirche.⁽⁵⁾ He conducted music in each on alternate Sundays over a period of twenty-seven years and wrote roughly a new cantata every month. Bach 'composed at least 265 Cantatas during the twenty-seven years of his Cantorship.'⁽⁶⁾ More significant still, Dr. Terry is of opinion that most of, perhaps all of, his large works were composed for production at St. Thomas'. The reaction of the church as an instrument upon the composer is obvious and more especially so when we remember that the works for the most part were performed as soon as written.

What kind of building therefore was St. Thomas'?

The church has considerable character. It is as large as a small cathedral. The plan and section are given in figs. 1 and 2, and views in figs. 3 and 4. The acoustic analysis is given at the end of the article. The church is a late Gothic, three aisled building, of Augustinian foundation with level vaults, no transepts, and a narrow altar piece or chancel set not in the same straight line as the nave. It was dedicated in 1496 and in 1539 was taken over by the Reformers, who removed choir screen and side altars and made of it a parish church under the Leipzig Municipality. Engravings of the middle sixteenth century show it externally much as it is to-day and the shell of the church, with the major interior dimensions, has remained unchanged, giving an air volume of some 640,000 cubic feet. The vaulting under the galleries suggests that the church was originally planned with a west gallery which was prolonged one bay down each aisle.⁽⁷⁾ This is likely, since a west gallery in German churches goes back into medieval times and may have developed naturally out of the

(5) The latter was a smaller building with a cramped organ gallery on the south aisle, and from an executant point of view, though not necessarily from a hearer's point of view, would certainly have been less satisfactory.

(6) Terry. *C. S. Bach: a Biography*. p. 177.

(7) See Gurlitt, C. *Bau und Kunstdenkmale des Königreichs Sachsen*. Leipzig. Vol. I, p. 45.

Romanesque tribune galleries which are occasionally found at the west end. The existing gallery fronts, however, both on the west and all along the sides, are of an early Renaissance design in red sandstone dating from the end of the sixteenth century. In 1707 there were further alterations and yet more galleries were built together with small boxes and numerous staircases. A drawing in the church archives shows at the west end two tiers of galleries—the upper one holding the choir and organ, the lower used evidently as a kind of *loge*. Above the existing side galleries the same drawing shows an upper tier. This tier was probably used for private boxes. An interior view in the Stadtmuseum (fig. 4) shows the numerous private boxes or 'swallows' nests.' These boxes were comfortably furnished and within them on high festivals important Hofraths and Bürgermeisters—connoisseurs in Passion music—reclined at their ease behind curtains that could be slightly drawn so as just not to hide the crowds below.⁽⁶⁾ From these 'nests' also various members of the school council kept a critical eye on the boys of the Thomaschule in the gallery and on old Bach rising from the clavier for the choruses with a tight roll of music for baton. The encroachment of galleries and boxes in this way was due to the Lutheran system of church government which placed the church under the town council. But it also showed the importance and popularity of the church as a building, and we must remember that it created the acoustic conditions that made possible the seventeenth century development of cantata and Passion. The building became, in fact, a kind of religious opera house. In Bach's time the gallery at the east end of the nave held an extra organ. The 'swallows' nests' and upper tier of side boxes were swept away in 1877, at which time the present arrangement of west gallery and organ was made. But the seating in Bach's time would have been less dense, and reverberation would have been only slightly less with a full congregation than at present. The reverberation figure for a festival congregation of 1,800 under present conditions works out at $2\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. This figure represents acoustically a compromise between cathedral and concert room conditions. An English Gothic church of this size would have some four or five seconds reverberation, whereas a concert hall seating 1,800 would probably have not more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ seconds. At St. Thomas' also the source of sound is well placed. The position of the choir and orchestra in the west gallery enables them to make use of the level vault as a reflector, and tone is, in fact, directed down on the congregation without noticeable echo paths. In Bach's time the choir were slightly higher. A third point is the large amount of resonant wood area present, as much as 15,200

(6) Good examples of these boxes still surviving can be seen in the town church at Weimar.

square feet. Fourthly, the church has no 'note' or fixed tonality. The note of a large church—generally treble A—gives a preference to works in the key of A and makes unaccompanied singing in any other key more difficult. The 'reciting note' or 'Collect note' in any large church is generally treble A or A flat for the same reason, and this fact has profoundly influenced medieval music. But in the Thomaskirche there seems to be no special region of 'response,' probably due to the unicellular nave, the absence of transepts, and to the comparatively short reverberation. And we find that Bach was not restricted, but wrote his works in all kinds of keys. Also he was able, owing to the moderate reverberation of the Lutheran church or chapel, to write fugues for the organ with rapid bass parts. Many of the fugues, owing to their *tempo*, are lost in cathedrals, the bass parts becoming nothing but a confused roaring. If Bach had had to play in King's College Chapel, Cambridge, instead of in a Lutheran building, he would not have composed fugues with such parts. But though exact phrasing is possible in St. Thomas', the full singing tone of voices is not sacrificed. On any Friday or Saturday the visitor may hear the boys of the Thomasschule singing motets and Latin psalms by Palestrina and Vittoria.

Having noted these things I attended the bicentenary performance of the 'St. Matthew' Passion music with interest. The ordinary festival arrangements of the church were followed. The chancel was filled with seats facing west. Carpets were laid on gangways. The total congregation was about 1,800. The gallery contained a choir of 150 and orchestra of 60—far in excess of the forces employed by Bach. The *continuo* was taken on the organ and the recitative accompaniments on a large harpsichord. The performance under Dr. Straube was a revelation of tone full and powerful, but highly disciplined. The soloists had not to strain. The orchestra, though large, was grouped and trained for its parts, and the parts 'were heard like silken threads'; the tone of strings specially benefited from the large wood area. Strings and voices were complementary and thus the true architectonic design of the music was instantly perceived. Also there was no dragging. The new German church *tempo*, the fruit of an intelligent scholarship, was obvious and one recalled those words in the Bach necrology 'he was very accurate, and extremely sure in the *tempo* which he generally took very briskly.'⁽⁹⁾ By the congregation seated in the nave facing east the choir was not seen: the high piers and fine proportions of the church alone presented themselves, and at times music and architecture combined to reveal the genius of pure structure.

⁽⁹⁾ As quoted by Schweitzer in *J. S. Bach*. Vol. I, p. 210.

St. Thomas is in fact a home for the music, and this is soon realised when we try in England to find a suitable auditory either for the B minor Mass or the 'Matthew' Passion music. The concert hall performance with its Handelian technique has obvious disadvantages—the massed instruments have first to make themselves heard against the chorus and the chorus must shout against its own absorption. Yet a small choir and small orchestra in a crowded concert hall will not give the body of tone required. On the other hand, in a cathedral nave having a long reverberation although choral tone is enhanced, strings at ordinary *tempo* are only articulate in the upper registers, 'cellos and double basses are almost inaudible, staccato passages run together, brass is generally far too loud, and male soloists sound harsh. That this is not more recognised by musicians is due to the fact that conductors situated near their sound source get enough direct sound to steer by. But it is far otherwise to listeners in the body of the church. Thus, at the Canterbury festival in August, 1929, a velarium hung over the orchestra reduced reverberation locally to a point suitable for a microphone pick-up, but the *Observer* critic (Mr. A. H. Fox Strangways) reported as follows:—'Reverberation blurred all orchestral effects . . . the difficulty arose with any sort of filigree. Elgar's "Enigma Variations" and Bach's tripartite strings in the third Brandenburg were mostly chaos.'

The Bach Cantata Club had therefore a real problem in acoustics when they had to choose an auditorium and in St. Margaret's, Westminster, whether by accident or design, they found the satisfactory compromise between church and concert hall conditions which we have already referred to.

St. Margaret's, a perpendicular church with wood ceilings and without transepts, has had an acoustic history eventful as St. Thomas'. It, too, was re-formed not long after it was completed and its painted screen and altars were torn down. Its walls have heard Latin Mass, Anglican Liturgy and Independent sermon. As chapel extraordinary to the House of Commons it was a good preaching place and the scene of Dr. Usher's sermons. It received from Wren in 1681 an enormous centrally placed pulpit and galleries.⁽¹⁰⁾ It had originally an apse at the east end. In the eighteenth century organ and choir were placed in a western gallery, but in the nineteenth century all galleries were swept away and the church was restored by Gothic scholars nearly to its medieval form.

It is without a marked 'note,' has a very large wood area and with a full congregation of 1,000 gives a reverberation of just under two seconds. The analysis in table form is given on p. 155. Both

(10) Westlake's *St. Margaret's, Westminster*. p. 68.

St. Margaret's and St. Thomas' have wood floors to the pews with air space beneath giving highly resonant areas.

The success of the church was clearly shown at the English bicentenary performance of the 'St. Matthew' Passion performed by the Club on November 27th, 1929, under Mr. Kennedy Scott. Comparing the two performances—the English and the German—in retrospect, each so scholarly, one is conscious not only of two techniques but also of two interpretations of the structure of Bach's music, of two languages with their underlying vowel scales each with a different emotional content, and modifying both, two church forms, each with its roots in a rich but distinct medieval culture. The Cantata Club had limited its forces to little more than those originally used by Bach. Mr. Kennedy Scott employed about thirty-five voices and twenty-seven instruments, including a harpsichord, and had this advantage that the instruments could make themselves heard without any effort against the voices; each instrument had to be as a soloist and the delicacy and incorporation of the performers in the dexterous counterpoint was obvious. Also the choir under the acoustic conditions of St. Margaret's had the 'fullness' though not the 'strength' of tone of the larger German choir, and this was helped not only by the right reverberation but by the longer sound path to the roof and down again, which is given by a floor position of the choir. The beautiful *cantabile* tone both of soloists and chorus was achieved by making use of the church as an instrument. Thus the chorales at St. Margaret's, unaccompanied, and sung with contemplation, had a beauty of escape, and were unlike the German chorales which came like great organic beats in the structure of the drama. On the other hand, at St. Thomas' the German choir position on a western gallery, with its tone delivery from the vault, gave an advantage in attack. There was nothing in St. Margaret's so shattering as the German rendering of 'Loose Him! Leave Him! Bind Him not!' and of the music that follows with its ordered instrumental conflict and shouting of gargoyles as though a Gothic roof had come alive. And this intense German quality was made possible by the language. Bach is supreme in his use both of the vowel scale underlying the music and of the penetrating German consonants. Just as Milton in English verse can take a word and summon into it a whole world of experience, so can Bach when he breathes the word *bete* or sings *Schmerzen*. Without this first music of the language the English version was cold and by comparison colourless. But this was inevitable. And this very elimination left a marvellously clear musical profile—a universality of artistic effect. Thus in more ways than one the English was the rendering of the sanctuary with its few consecrated voices, the German the rendering of the nave with its breath as of the people. We have

seen indeed that the masses by invading the German church created the tone conditions under which such music was made possible, and in Germany the people, whether silent or quietly following the chorales, seem a part of the performance, while the music is known intimately to a very great number. At St. Margaret's we were listeners only, in a church restored to its medieval forms, and attentive to our singers who were making use of the original acoustic conditions much as they had been made use of in medieval times. In both it was made evident that in such supreme musical works personal Christianity is likely to be preserved more safely against attack than formerly behind the walls of monastic fortresses.

HOPE BAGENAL.

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LEIPZIG THOMASKIRCHE

REVERBERATION TABLE

Volume 640,000 cu. ft. Seating, 1,800 (Congregation). Cube per seat, 355 cu. ft.

Absorbent.	Remarks.	Area or Number Sq. ft.	Co-efficient.	No. of Units.	Adjustment.	Net No. of Units.
Plaster on rubble, stone walls and brick vaults	Lime plaster dis-tempered	38,000	0.025	950	[Adjustments made in the separate items]	950
Stone gallery fronts and piers	Red sandstone, slightly porous	4,000	0.03	120	Add 10% for breaks and mouldings	132
Marble floor to Sanctuary		1,500	0.01	15		15
Window glass in lead and iron frames	Responds to middle pitch	3,400	0.027	918	Add 25% for transmission	1,147
Wood panelling in aisles and Sanctuary	Oak. Responds to low middle pitch	3,000	0.1	300		300
Wood panelling in galleries	Oak. Responds to high middle pitch	1,900	0.1	190		190
Wood floors to pew areas	Air space 1 ft. under deal boards. High middle pitch. Very resonant	5,100	0.1	510	Less 10% for shading	459
Wood floors to galleries	Responds to high middle pitch	5,200	0.1	520	Less 10% for shading	468
Lino. on remainder gangways	No undermat	4,000	0.04	160		160
Carpeting, nave and Sanctuary	Exposed No undermat	520	0.15	78		78
Wood pew ends and exposed desks	Oak varnished	2,000	0.06	120		120
Curtains in Sanctuary	Heavy tapestry	390	0.2	78		78
Curtains in galleries and over nave door	Thick wool	1,000	0.15	150		150
Brocade panels and canvases in Sanctuary		840	0.1	84		84
Organ chamber and opening	Wood and pipes	550	0.08	44		44
Pew seats in nave and galleries plus few chairs	Large deal tip-ups in nave. Gallery pews. Cane chairs. No cushions	1,613	Average 0.3 per seating	484		484
TOTAL PERMANENT ABSORPTION						4,859
Full congregation	On pews and seats as above	1,800	4.7 less 0.3=4.4 per person	7,920		7,920
One-third congregation	On pews and seats as above	600	4.7 less 0.3=4.4 per person	2,640		2,640
Choir & orchestra	Neglect seats	210	4.7	987		987

$$t = \begin{cases} \text{Full congregation (1,800)} & \dots \dots 2.5 \text{ seconds.} \\ \text{One third congregation (600)} & \dots \dots 4.3 \text{ " } \\ \text{Rehearsal (210)} & \dots \dots 5.8 \text{ " } \\ \text{Empty} & \dots \dots 6.6 \text{ " } \end{cases}$$

ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER

REVERBERATION TABLE

Volume 257,000 cu. ft. Average seating, 1,000. Cube per seat, 257 cu. ft.

Absorbent.	Remarks.	Area or Number Sq. ft.	Co-efficient.	No. of Units.	Adjustment.	Net No. of Units.
Masonry. Rag-stone not plastered	Friable and slightly porous	10,900	0.08	327	Plus 5% for breaks, Monuments, etc.	343
Stone and tile flooring		2,600	0.02	52		52
Glass in lead panes	Responds to middle tones	4,000	0.027	108	Add 25% for transmission	135
Glass panes in choir screens	Responds to middle and middle high	112	0.027	3		3
Wood ceilings		7,250	0.06	435		435
Wood panelling in chancel	Responds to middle tones	300	0.1	30		30
Wood pew flooring	Responds to low middle tones	4,620	0.06	277	Less 10% for shading	250
Elm pews. Back and end panels	Responds to middle tones	5,250 sq. ft.	0.06	315		315
Elm pew seatings	With a number of seat mats	1,000 seats	0.2 per seat	200		200
Hassocks	10 x 15 x 5 in.	No. 1,000	0.5 each	500	Less 10% for shading	450
Organ case	Wood and pipes	504	0.08	50		50
Curtains. Flags. Altar carpet		250	Average 0.12	30		30
TOTAL PERMANENT ABSORPTION						2,293
Choir		30	4.7	141		141
Congregation full	Coeff. 4.7—0.2 = 4.5	1,000	4.5	4,500		4,500
Congregation, one-third	Coeff. 4.7—0.2 = 4.5	330	4.5	1,500		1,500

$$\text{Reverberation } t = \begin{cases} \text{Congregation, full} & \dots = 1.9 \\ \text{Congregation, one-third} & \dots = 3.3 \\ \text{Rehearsal} & \dots = 5.3 \\ \text{Empty} & \dots = 5.6 \end{cases}$$

$t = \frac{V}{A} \times 0.05$. t is the period of reverberation after the sound source has ceased, measured in seconds; V is the air volume of the hall included within its bounding surfaces in cu. ft.; A is the total number of units of absorption provided by all the surfaces and objects in the buildings as set out in detail in the tables; the figure 0.05 is the Sabine constant for buildings measured in foot units.

PAN IN VESTMENTS

WE may find that for which we seek. In the chronicles of medieval music there are concealed many revelations of sincerity, of purity, of religious faith, and of the most exalted mysticism. There, too, is the persistent touch of the spirit of Pan, confronting us in the midst of majesty, like a grinning and self-sufficient gargoyle ensconced in the shadowy vistas of some cathedral aisle. In the middle ages, churchly levity marked a transitional stage in the growth of non-ecclesiastical music, a stage also in the beginnings of the drama. Pan had no reign, but he ruled truly the interregnum before the solemn inroads of Protestantism.

The noticeable secularisation of the church service took place after A.D. 1000. At that time, the end of the world had been expected, and elaborate preparations had been made for it. The failure of the world to play its part in the ceremony produced a very natural reaction of levity. This reaction affected the church services as it did all other phases of the life of the people. The tendency already present became more marked after that time.

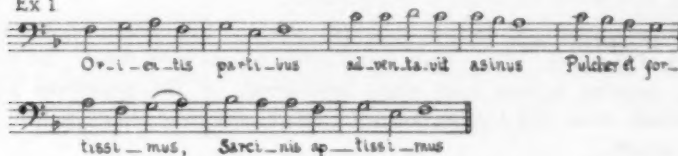
There was an increasing carelessness in the performance of the service, either from intention or lack of attention. The name of 'psalm-skipper' illustrated one aspect of this inaccuracy. 'I bear the syllables cut off from the reading and the verses of the psalms, which these clergy here stole last night,' Tityvillus says. 'These are they who wickedly corrupt the holy psalms: the dangler, the gasper, the leaper, the galloper, the dragger, the mumblor.' Oelred, Scottish abbot of Riverby in the twelfth century, rails at the singers, imitating horses or women. He claims that they make ridiculous gestures, twisting the lips, rolling the eyes, and bending the fingers. This chaotic condition was especially observed following the adoption of part-singing.

The most famous illustration of this secularisation is the Feast of Asses (*festum asinorum*), celebrated on the fourteenth of January. It originated in the eleventh century and developed during that stage in church music, when partly Latin and partly vernacular were being used. Also at this time popular tunes were being gradually inserted into the songs of worship.

The Feast of Asses was a burlesque representing essentially the flight to Egypt. A beautiful girl was the Virgin, bearing in her arms

the image of the Child. She entered the church on an ass, elaborately decorated for the occasion. A great procession of clergy and people followed. In dismounting, she tethered the ass, and sat on the steps of the altar, or in some cases was stationed, seated on the ass, at the Gospel side of the high altar. There was a solemn mass; the Introit, Kyrie, Gloria and Credo terminated with a melodious 'Hee-haw.' At the end of the service, the priest brayed three times to which the people responded in like manner. This ceremony undoubtedly had a pronounced effect upon the mystery plays.

Ex 1

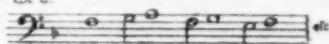


The refrain was:—

Hez! Sire Asnes, car chantez
Belle bouche rechignez
Vous aurez du foin assez
Et de l'avoine a manger.

Triple time as applied to the 'Ass' facilitated the dancing.

Ex 2



This triple time was also used in the monasteries where hymns and sequences were used in the merry-makings. Often beautiful melodies were evolved in this way. The attempts to abolish this ceremony were unsuccessful until the ultimate intervention of Parliament, says Du Cange in his *Glossarium* of 1678.

Cutts says that the custom of using the churchyard for business and pleasure was very common and very persistent. Sports, fairs, and markets were often held there. In 1416 the common market was complained of at St. Michael le Belfry, York.

Bishop Poore of Salisbury we find forbidding 'the holding of dances or base and dishonest games which provoke to lasciviousness in

the churchyard.' These dances were often held there, but especially on May Day and Saints' Eves. 'The devil is the inventor and governor and disposer of dances and dancers.' In 1217, the Synod of Exeter stipulated 'that they publicly proclaim in their churches that no one presume to carry on combats, dances, or other improper sports in the churchyards, especially on the even and feasts of saints, or stage plays or farces.' 'For holy days and Sundays,' says le Maire d'Angers, in 1811, 'are not celebrated or kept as the laws bid—and sometimes on those more sins are committed than in the whole week; nor doth the people seem to care for divine things, but only for songs, jests, dances, caperings, or foul and dishonest chants, even within the churches or churchyards.'

These games and dances were also given in the church on certain days of the year. The organ was played in time with them. In this way popular hymns were often introduced, or the sequences and graduals were still further altered. On Easter, the clergy joined in the sports.

The Ball Dance occurred in the choir. The Dean or sometimes the Archbishop threw it first. Then the choir boys played with it in the chancel. It would seem that the music itself often originated these merriments and grotesques.

The Burial of Alleluia was one of the most charming ceremonies produced during this period. The Alleluia was not sung during Lent. With a mimic ceremony the Alleluia was interred. The choristers carried crosses, torches, holy water, and incense. The turf carried was shaped like a coffin to represent the dead Alleluia. Sometimes they whipped a top in front of the procession. A dirge was sung as they marched down the churchyard to the grave.

William of Wykeham 'found it necessary for the protection of the sculpture in the reredos to make a statute against dancing or jumping in the chapel or adjoining hall.' One suspects that it was a little difficult to enforce any such regulation.

Coulton considers that 'the comic side of these services sometimes became almost as important as the serious.' Certainly it is true that the greatest freedom was allowed on the feast days, although undue licence only became universally widespread in the sixteenth century.

As early as the twelfth century there are records of the Feast of Fools held by the deacons on St. Stephen's Day, December 26. After the first *Benedicamus Domino* at the evensong on Christmas Day, all the deacons arrayed in silken copes and holding each a light in his hand, walked in procession and singing to St. Stephen's altar, where they made a commemoration of him, and the officiating priest censured his image; after which they went back into the choir, chant-

ing an anthem in praise of the Blessed Virgin Mary. On the morrow, the day of the saint's feast, the deacons, vested in silken copes, led the choir in various parts of the service.

An Abbot of Fools was appointed, sometimes called the Abbot of Unreason, or the Pope of Fools. The sermon was preached by a porter, and the High Mass celebrated by the 'pope.' According to Leach, at vespers, the *Te Deum* was sung and the 'Lord of Misrule' carried on their shoulders to the common room. He was revered by all. Fruit, spices and wines were served. During the performance of the service, the two sides of the choir tried to drown each other out. Then they all rushed into the street, forming a procession and levying contributions.

It is not surprising that Bishop Grosseteste of Lincoln protested in 1236 when the subdeacons sang purposely out of tune, when the Mass was a burlesque, and the sermon a sham, vestments were worn inside out, incense was made out of black puddings and sausages, when they often dressed as women, and commonly wore masks!

December 27, the Day of St. John the Evangelist, was the feast day for the priests. As time went on, audiences would gather, hoping for a portion of the cake and spiced wine. During the period of greater license the songs were unreserved, there was dice-playing at the altar, incense was made out of old shoes, and there was leaping and shouting around the choir. The dancers made a chain and danced something in the nature of a farandole under the joyous guidance of the priests. It will be seen that they extended their feasting to the Innocents' Day. It is also surmised that the 'artistic vagabonds' were not altogether uninfluential in the production and development of these songs and dances.

The choir or schoolboys' feast was on the 28th, known as Innocents' Day. For this occasion a Boy Bishop, 'a Nicholas and his clerks,' was elected by the other children on the fifth of December, the eve of St. Nicholas, patron of schoolboys for many centuries. The Boy Bishop did not officiate until after Christmas. At Eton on St. Nicholas Day he officiated at evensong and at Mass, however, up to the more solemn part of the offertory. Then came his rule for a fortnight of 'serious drollery,' with feasts, lasting sometimes indeed from the sixteenth of December to the sixth of January. These feasts, revels, and masques compensated for the restraint of the rest of the year. Often wealthy men would give feasts at this time during which the Boy Bishop and his followers had the highest places.

The Feast was most widely recognised about the middle of the twelfth century and was an officially recognised licence. The earliest mention of it is at St. Gall in Switzerland in 991—the *Festum*

puerorum—although an even earlier notice is claimed for England in the seventh century. The cult of St. Nicholas is still older, having originated in the East.

With the singing of the Magnificat, 'He hath put down the mighty from their seat,' all exchanged places. All services were performed by the Boy Bishop on that day. Nicholas and his clerks, arrayed in vestments, and carrying burning tapers, sang the 'Centum Quadraginta,' '144,000 who were brought from earth, the first-fruits of God and the Lamb,' the Bishop beginning and the other boys following. A verse, 'Hi emti sunt ex omnibus,' was sung by three boys. While singing they walked processionally from the choir to the altar of the Blessed Trinity, Dean and Canons, Chaplains, Bishop with his little prebends. The altar and the image of the Holy Trinity were censured by the Boy Bishop. All sang the anthem and recited the prayer commemorative of the Trinity. On going back to the choir, the Bishop took his seat, and the children the Canons' stalls on each side of the Quire, while the dignitaries served in their place. The Canons carried incense and the book, and the Petit Canons, the tapers. The others served like acolytes, thurifers, and lower clerks. 'Standing on high, wearing his mitre, and holding his staff in his left hand, the Boy Bishop after the service gave a solemn benediction to all present, and while making the sign of the Cross over the kneeling crowd, said:—

Crucis signo vos consigno; vestra sit tuitio
Quos nos emit et redemit suae carnis pretio.

No one was allowed to interrupt or press upon the children during this or other processions. During the day they made a procession through the streets, levying food and money. At supper they were accompanied by their superiors. In fact, the earliest mention in England is connected with this supper. Then they were conducted back to the Almonry by the resident Canon with 'dancing, singing and torches.' There they were given wine and candles. On the next day he preached the sermon written for him. One in 1498 was as follows:—

In the begynnynge thenne of this simple exhortacyon, that I a chylde, wantynge the habyte of connyng, maye be directed by hym that gave to that chile Danyell *Sermonem rectum et Spiritum Deorum*, somwhat to say to his laude and praysynge, and to alle pure chylterne that bene here present edifyenge, we shall atte this tyme devoutly make our prayers.

In the whiche prayers I recomende unto your devocyons the welfare of all Chrysts chirche; our holy fader the Pope with alle the Clergye, my Lorde of Caunterbury, and the ryghte reverende

fader and worshipfull lorde my broder Bysshopp of London your dyocesan, also for my worshipfull broder Deane of thie cathedrall chirche,—

In the thyrd partye, all the soules lyenge in the paynes of Purgatory; speecially for the soule of the reverende fader my lorde Thomas Kempe late Bysshop, and for the soules of all Benefactors of thys chirche of Poules, with all Crysten soules, for the whiche and for the entent primysed I praye you devoutly saye a Pater Noster and an Ave.

Laudate Pueri Dominum.

In as moche Cryste sayth in the Gospell,—‘ Suffre ye childerne to come to me, for of suche the Kyngdom of heven is fulfilled,’ by whom, after saynt Austyn, it is not onely understoude those bene chylderne of age, but those that bene chylderne pure in clenness from synne and malyce.—And in this fourme alle maner of people and al manner of ages in clenness of lyf ought to be pure as childerne, to whom generally may I saye *Laudate, pueri, Dominum; Laudate.*

In the nunneries a Girl Abbess or Abbess of Fools was elected from the novices and took the place of the abbess and nuns. The festivities were similar and ‘suffered with disapproval.’ The girls on St. Catherine’s Day made a procession about town until it was forbidden in Cramner’s time. The rites were revived under Mary. Sometimes they allowed a Boy Bishop to come instead from the neighbouring church. At Winchester in 1441, ‘the boys of the Almonry, together with the boys of the chapel of St. Elizabeth, dressed up after the manner of girls, dancing, singing, and performing plays before the abbess and nuns of St. Mary’s Abbey in their hall on the Feast of Innocents.’ This occasion often meant a better dinner at the nunneries for the little boys.

Notations are found regarding this ceremony at the Chapel Royal and St. Paul’s, where they were allowed for several days to assume authority over their superiors. ‘All these children shall every Childermas Daye, come to Paulis church, and hear the childe bishop sermon; and after be at the hygh masse.’ The Bishop wore a ring on his finger and mitre of cloth of gold with silver-gilt knobs and with pearls. In 1295 at St. Paul’s is cited ‘a mitre embroidered with flowers for the use of the Bishop of the little ones, a pastoral staff, whose curve and pommel is of copper gilt, with many vines and images.’ At Lincoln, a cope of red velvet was ordered for the ‘barn-bishop.’ ‘A miter upon his head and such an one too som had, as was verie much richer than those of Bishops indeed,’ says John Gregorie in his account of 1649.

At York in 1321, a gold ring was ordered ‘with a great stone for the Bishop of the Innocents.’ The Boy Bishop was to be ‘a senior-

boy so long as he was sufficiently good-looking.' The custom continued at Salisbury until the sixteenth century. The boys ordered canons to be incensed and book-bearers and designated those who were to carry candles.

A reaction to the celebrations is noted as early as the fourteenth century in England. In 1279, the children's activities were confined to the one day. There was a cutting of the expenses at St. Paul's. At Salisbury, in 1319, the people were ordered not to crowd in. The Bishop forbade any feasting or visits outside to any other than canons. He threatened to excommunicate any who hustled or hindered the boys. At Wells, in 1331, the plays were so elaborate as to be given in the cathedral with masks. In 1339, at Ottery, the insolence in begging was disliked. Exeter, in 1360, complained of the spoiling of the vestments.

At the Council of Basle in 1435 there was a general denunciation of the feast days. In 1518 the custom was still in existence, however. Erasmus wrote a sermon for a Boy Bishop, 'Concio de puero Jesu.' In 1541 it was abolished by Henry VIII. It was revived under Mary and disappeared under Elizabeth. Such a custom was no longer needed in the sixteenth century as they then had regular plays and holidays. It is, nevertheless, still maintained in a very modified form in many convents and monasteries of the present day.

EVELYN BENHAM.

A THIRTEENTH CENTURY BALLAD OPERA

TOWARDS the end of the thirteenth century there was produced at the French Court of the Duke of Artois, at Naples, the celebrated pastoral comedy with music, 'Le jeu de Robin et de Marion.' The composer-librettist was Adam de la Halle, often called the 'Hunchback of Arras.' As is well known, Adam was one of the last of the great succession of 'trouvères' whose poesy was the glory of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Now, although most musical historians mention this work, I have found that, apart from the information contained in several highly specialised works, very little has actually been said about its nature, or of its relation to the rest of Adam de la Halle's output. Even 'Grove,' generally so rich in detail, does not tell us much, and repeats the usual error of stating that there are eleven personages in the cast of the little comedy.

In this brief sketch, I do not claim to have brought to light many new facts; I shall merely outline the play itself, and point out certain significant features which I have noticed, partly through consulting the above-mentioned specialised works, and partly through preparing the piece for performance in English.⁽¹⁾

The work itself is found in various manuscripts of the thirteenth century, but in its complete form, with the music, it is found in two only, the MS. de la Vallière and a manuscript at Aix. The latter contains variants of the music and is obviously less ancient than the former. In neither manuscript is there any suggestion of harmony: and apparently this was intentional, since the MS. de la Vallière contains rondeaux and motets noted down by the same copyist, who would not have failed to note down the airs in the pastoral in the same way, had the composer devised them polyphonically.

'Robin and Marion' was first printed by the Société des Bibliophiles de Paris in 1822 (thirty copies only). This edition was followed by several others, all without music. But in 1872 Coussemaker brought out his 'Oeuvres complètes du Trouvère Adam de la Halle,' including both the words and the music of 'Robin and Marion.' This led to a request on the part of the Société des Compositeurs de Musique for a performance of the work. Accordingly, M. J. B. Weckerlin, librarian of the Paris Conservatoire, prepared a limited edition of the airs with

(1) At the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

a modern accompaniment, from which a reading was given before the society. Next, in 1896, a performance of the pastoral was made the central feature of the fêtes held at Arras in the composer's honour. For this occasion a new edition was prepared by M. Julian Tiersot, who also wrote an essay on the play. Finally, an important book on the life and works of Adam de la Halle was published by M. Henri Guy in 1898. This contains what is perhaps the most comprehensive discussion of the pastoral and its significance, though the author does not quote from the music.

An examination of the text reveals several very interesting points. There are ten characters, four of these being singers, although most of the others join in the one unison chorus which occurs about the middle of the piece. These ten characters exclude two horn players who 'come on' towards the end of the work in order to assist in the performance of music for the final dances, but include three characters who, according to M. Henri Guy, have been added by some late interpolator. The cast is as follows (I use the names as they appear in our English version):

MARION	A Shepherdess.
SIR HUBERT	A Knight.
ROBIN	A Rustic Swain.
WALTER	The cousin of Marion.
HUMPHREY	The cousin of Marion.
PEGGY	A Shepherdess.
THOMAS	A Countryman.
WILLIAM	A Countryman.
GILES	The brother of Peggy.
ROGER	A Countryman.

The stage setting must have been of the simplest type. In all probability the play was acted out of doors. Although no actual changes of scene are mentioned, the play would appear to require at least six.

Scene 1.	A meadow near a wood.
Scene 2.	Outside Walter's Mill.
Scene 3.	Outside Giles' Cottage.
Scene 4.	A meadow near a wood.
Scene 5.	Outside Giles' Cottage.
Scene 6.	A meadow near a wood.

Strictly speaking, the work can hardly be called either a play or an opera, for there is no real plot. The main subject is merely a variant of that theme which was so popular among the Troubadours for their 'pastourelles,' wherein a charming shepherdess is wooed by a knight, repulses him, and remains true to her rustic lover. But

this represents only the first portion of 'Robin and Marion.' The remainder consists of a series of idylls, characteristic of French country life in the thirteenth century, which were well calculated to comfort the homesick Frenchmen who were exiled in Italy.

Nevertheless, although we may scarcely call 'Robin and Marion' an opera, we know that it is the first completely recorded example of the intermingling, in a secular theatrical piece, of music and verse, by couplets and dialogues which have for their sole end the furthering of the action.

The work commences with the delightful and oft quoted 'Robin loves me,' sung by Marion, the little shepherdess, in a meadow near a wood.

"Robin loves me"

Ex 1 Marion

Ro-bin loves me, loves but me, Ro-bin sought me, gladly his true love I shall be

Ro-bin has made me presents rare, scarlet pet-ti-coat so fair, scarlet girdle, smock of

scarlet, these shall I wear Ro-bin loves me, loves but me Ro-bin sought me, gladly his true love

I shall be

As she is singing, she hears the voice of a knight, Sir Hubert, who is evidently seeking for her. She calls upon Robin to come and escort her home, but immediately the Knight enters. Having wished her good morrow, he asks her mockingly for whom she sings the song 'Robin loves me.'

Marion tells him of her lover, who has wooed her in true rustic fashion, by presenting her with various homely gifts. Then Sir Hubert tries to win Marion's confidence, but she wilfully misinterprets his questions. Annoyed, Hubert drops all subterfuge and asks, 'Sweet Shepherdess, could'st love a knight?' But Marion steadfastly refuses to have anything to do with him, saying, 'Never will I love thee; I may be but a humble shepherdess, but I shall be true to my dear Robin.' The Knight replies, 'God give thee joy of him; since it is so, I will wend my way hence, and will plague thee no more.' Then follows a delicious 'dialogue in music,' sung by Marion and Sir Hubert, after which the Knight leaves the Shepherdess.

Ex 2 Marion 'Ho! Hey nonny no!'

Ho! hey nonny no, nonny no, nonny non-my Ho! hey nonny no, nonny, nonny, nonny no

Hubert

While thro' the wood I rode, Forth from her poor a-look. There came my beauteous queen; Kings met her like have seen, Hey

ho! hey nonny no, nonny no, nonny nonny Ho! hey nonny no nonny, nonny, nonny no

Although it is regularly stated that the characters in this pastoral do not sing together, but successively (except in the solitary chorus), I can scarcely imagine any producer, from Adam de la Halle himself downwards, being able to resist the temptation to make both voices sing the last two lines together. There is, however, no indication of this in the text.

As the last notes of this musical dialogue die away, a second dialogue begins. Marion has caught sight of Robin and calls to him. He replies and enters the stage. The Shepherdess tells him of her encounter with the Knight and of her loyalty, for which Robin praises her. The pair sit on the grass together and partake of a frugal meal, after which Robin, desirous of proving Marion's loyalty to him, engages in a fresh dialogue with her, unfortunately too long to quote in its entirety.

Ex 3 "Sweet Shepherdess" *

Robin

Sweet Shepherdess, O wilt thou give to me thy chap-let so gay? Shepherdess, Shepherd-ess Will thou give to me thy chap-let so gay?

* Following the example of Weckerlin, I have transposed several of the airs in order to give variety; they are practically all in F major in the original.

At the conclusion of this dialogue, Marion says, 'Now, Robin, amuse me.' Robin replies, 'Shall we dance, or shall we talk?' This gives Adam de la Halle the opportunity to introduce a charming rondeau, for such the dance certainly is.

"Robin, by my father's soul"

Ex 4. Marion Robin



Robin, by my father's soul, O tell me, canst thou dance with me? Marion,
by my mother's soul I can, so come, I'll dance with thee Trip it round from my
beauty, Trip it now with me.....

The joy of this dance causes Marion to suggest that Robin should bring some friends to join in their merrymaking; so Robin goes to fetch Walter and Humphrey, and to get his 'cornemuse' or bagpipe, adding significantly that his comrades might prove useful should the Knight return.

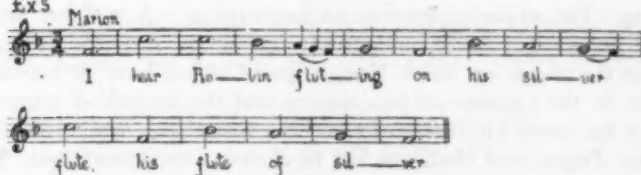
The scene now changes to Walter's Mill. Robin arrives, and, knocking at the door, calls upon Walter and Humphrey to come to his aid, as a scoundrelly knight has been making love to Marion. The others, grasping fork and cudgel, agree, and Robin sets out, leaving the others to follow.

Again the scene changes. Robin now arrives at Giles' cottage, and there invites Peggy, Giles' sister, to come and make one with Marion and the rest at a rustic gathering to be arranged by the Shepherdess. She promises to come when she has bedecked herself.

Once more the scene changes. We are back in the meadow where Marion sits awaiting Robin's return. Sir Hubert again approaches her, and at once suggests that she should be his lover. Marion refuses, and the Knight attempts to embrace her; but at that moment the sound of a flageolet is heard, whereupon Marion sings.

"I hear Robin"

Ex 5. Marion



I hear Ro-bin flut-ing on his sil-ver
flute, his flute of sil-ver

The Knight leaves her, and immediately picks a quarrel with Robin, and gives him a drubbing with the flat of his sword. Marion intercedes for her lover, and the Knight at once promises to release him if the Shepherdess will ride away with him; but Marion rejects his offer. The Knight seizes her, and Marion cries to Robin to save her. Robin rushes upon Sir Hubert, who draws his sword again, beats Robin down, and then drags Marion off.

Walter and Humphrey enter, too late to be of assistance. They leave the stage with Robin, and then the Knight, apparently moved by Marion's entreaties, or perhaps having spied Robin's reinforcements, brings her back, and bids her a mocking farewell, saying, 'Sweet Shepherdess, may God preserve thee. O, what a fool was I to trifle thus with thee. Fare thee well, Shepherdess, fare thee well, and may thy bumpkin lover have good joy of thee.'

The little Shepherdess is now in sorry plight; she imagines that her lover must think the worst of her. But her alarm does not last long, for she hears Robin calling to her. He enters with his friends, and she receives him joyfully. Other guests arrive, and all sing in chorus a song of praise to the good company in which they find themselves.

Marion proposes that they should play some game, and the party begin the game of 'Saint Coisne.' Robin is chosen to be the Saint. It is his duty to sit in state and receive trifling presents from the members of the party in turn. As each one kneels before him, he grimaces and tries to make the victim laugh. If he succeeds, the laughter has to become Saint in his turn.

But such an artless game does not hold the interest of the rustics for long, and Humphrey suggests the famous game of 'Kings and Queens.' The suggestion finds favour at once, and they 'count out' to see who will be King. The lot falls upon Humphrey, who is lifted on high and crowned with Peggy's best hat. King Humphrey at once calls his court together, one by one. As each presents himself or herself, the King propounds a question, which must be answered rapidly and briefly; and all his questions are designed to put his victims to the blush (as a matter of fact, this very game had been prohibited by the Synod of Worcester in 1240). Marion does her best to keep the questions within the bounds of propriety, without much success. But suddenly there is an interruption. A wolf has seized one of her sheep. Robin immediately rushes out, slays the wolf, and rescues the sheep, on which Marion, proud of her lover, is betrothed to him in the presence of her cousins and the assembled company. This is too much for Humphrey and the rest of the men, who begin to tease Peggy, and challenge her to choose a sweetheart too. This damsel, worldly-wise, chooses the well-to-do miller, Walter, whereupon the party sits down to a rustic repast, each one giving a share of the

good things. When asked for his contribution, Robin sings the famous air, also frequently quoted :

I have yet a pasty here

Ex 6 Robin

I have yet a pasty here, Shepherdess with-out com-pan That we two will
eat to-gether Face to face both I and thou That we two will eat to-gether
Face to face, both I and thou

and then, excusing himself, goes off to fetch more friends, with more delicacies.

The scene changes again and we are outside Giles' cottage. Robin, passing, hails Giles and his friends William and Roger, tells Giles that Walter wishes to wed Peggy, and begs him to forget past feuds. Giles agrees, and promises to come to the feast forthwith, bringing a couple of casks of wine with which the company may make merry.

Once more we are in the meadow. Peggy has spread her petticoat on the ground as a tablecloth, and all sit down to eat. Warmed by the wine, Walter begins to tease Marion, but is reprov'd by the gentle Shepherdess. However, he is not repressed, for he proposes to entertain the company with a song. Humphrey encourages him, and he begins, but Robin stops him after he has sung a few ribald bars, and Peggy proposes a dance instead. The rustic band of cornemuse and horns strikes up, and the company dance 'la tresque,' a species of 'farandole,' usually danced by six shepherds, headed by the most active among them, who established the time for the dancers, and led them hither and thither in graceful curves through the trees and bushes. The instrumentalists walked before the little procession. Unfortunately the music of this dance is not contained in the manuscripts.

At the conclusion of the dance, Robin strikes up the air :

'Follow thro' the Woodland.

Ex 7 Robin

Follow thro' the wood-land, fol-low Follow, fol-low,
fol-low, fol-low, fol-low, fol-low af-ter me.

the company disperses and the little piece ends.

I have said that such a naïve work can scarcely be called either play or opera, and yet the name 'ballad opera' would seem to be the most suitable that we may apply to it. In comparing the fresh melodies of this little pastoral with the more stilted motets and rondeaux of the period, one cannot help feeling that here is a 'popular' work, intended to make an immediate appeal to the lay mind.

No trace of harmony, that is, of vocal harmony, occurs in the manuscript. This is significant, since Adam de la Halle treated one of the airs, 'Robin m'aime,' contrapuntally in a motet. I quote the opening bars:

Ex. 8

Mout ne fu gracie de-part-ir de ma-mie-re, la jo-lie au cler
Ro-bin maim-e Ro-bin ma, Ro-bin
Portare

Had the composer desired such an effect in the play, he would doubtless have left the whole in score. But such a proceeding would have been quite foreign to the spirit of the piece.

There are fourteen airs, dialogues, or choruses scattered throughout the work. By far the greatest number are definitely in the key of F major, the sense of tonality being most marked. Of these fourteen numbers, seven are for a single voice; six, which are more extended, are dialogues for two voices: one alone is for chorus.

The bulk of the melodies occurs in the earlier part of the work, and is given to the three principal characters. The nature of these airs is such as to suggest that they were not actually composed by Adam de la Halle; they would appear to be folk songs, or derivatives of folk songs, pressed into service by the *trouvère*. M. Julien Tiersot goes so far as to maintain that not only the tunes are of the people, but also their words; and that Adam de la Halle left both untouched, merely incorporating them into his drama. Proof of this is afforded by the fact that five of the songs in 'Robin and Marion' have been found among the works of other mediæval writers, among them being those quoted in Exx. 1 and 3. By inference we may assume that in some cases simple instrumental accompaniments were utilised:

several instruments are enumerated throughout the piece, including the bagpipe (cornemuse), the flageolet and two horns.

Adam de la Halle had in this work a difficult problem to solve. In making his 'hero' a rustic, and his 'villain' a knight, he ran the risk of offending his aristocratic audience, unless his touch was very light. If the rustic Robin defeated the knight, knighthood would probably resent the imputed insult: but if the knight defeated Robin completely, then the play would perforce come to an end. So Adam skilfully compromised, and as a result has given us a miniature comedy of thirteenth century rustic manners, undoubtedly sowing a seed from which the future *opera comique* of France might spring.

Yet, in spite of the naïveté of the work, the characters are clearly drawn. Marion is an artless shepherd maid whose prime object in life is to enjoy herself; she is never without a song upon her lips, and is happiest when in the whirl of the dance. She is no passionate heroine, yet she dotes upon her country lover, always thinking of him, admiring him, and ever ready to defend him against slanderous tongues. Simple though she is, she is wise enough to see through the blandishments of the knight, and to keep him at arm's length by wilfully misinterpreting his meaning, pretending to be even simpler than she really is; and, in an age of free speech, she shows a strong sense of feminine delicacy that makes her stand out from her fellow characters in the play.

Robin is a simple country fellow, who, in spite of the fact that he is beaten by the knight, is by no means a coward. His attack on the wolf proves this, and one must blame his birth and training for his lack of prowess when confronted by Sir Hubert.

Moreover, Robin is in his way the hero of his village, taking the lead in all the simple rustic sports, and excelling both as musician and dancer.

Sir Hubert is a rather less interesting character. He is too conscious of his noble birth, presuming upon it when courting the shepherdess. He even makes it his excuse for finally leaving her. His contemptuous treatment of Robin was probably characteristic of the attitude which the average thirteenth century lord adopted towards a vassal.

But, in general, the characters in the little piece are conventional; it is in the fact that Adam de la Halle has made them appear living beings that his greatness lies. For they live and move, as it were, in a painted landscape, a kind of humble *fête champêtre*; and even after six and a half centuries of time, they still retain much of their pristine charm.

P. R. KIRBY.

FRENCH OPERA LIBRETTI

THE answer to the question of the general superiority of French opera libretti over those of any other country, will be found in the not long since published biography of Sir Arthur Sullivan, by the composer's nephew, the late Mr. Herbert Sullivan and Mr. Newman Flower. Sir W. S. Gilbert made it perfectly clear to his colleague that he did not wish to be 'submerged' by any composer in operatic productions. This was not always understood at the beginning by foreign composers visiting France, and among the notable examples were Rossini, Donizetti and Verdi. These distinguished Italians were, however, soon informed by those in power that no one would interfere with them in their treatment of their libretti hacks as long as they confined themselves to the Théâtre-Italien, but if they wished to seek fame and fortune as composers of French opera they would have to abide by French rules, and admit that their literary colleagues were their equals in the French lyrical theatres. This was by no means an early nineteenth century law.

A perusal of the voluminous 'Cours de Littérature' of Jean de La Harpe will show that this was in practice in the last half of the seventeenth century when the Florentine musician, Lulli, became musical director and composer of the French opera. His librettist, Quinault, was a distinguished man of letters, a member of the French Academy, and was received with more cordiality in aristocratic circles than the musician himself. Quinault's collection of libretti have been frequently reprinted and, in fact, have never been out of print. There are at least half-a-dozen modern editions of the complete works obtainable at the booksellers. Quinault's libretto of 'Armide,' originally composed for Lulli, was used by Gluck more than a century afterwards without the slightest alteration. During the eighteenth century, as La Harpe shows, the librettists of successive generations not only included many notable Academicians, but also famous poets, successful dramatists, popular novelists, and even the greatest European literary giant of the whole of the century, Voltaire. But fate ordained that he should be the most unfortunate. He wrote a libretto on the biblical Samson, for the composer Rameau, which was banned by the censor on religious grounds. It is, however, included in all the editions of his complete works. The 'book' of Saint-Saëns' opera is largely based on that of the great eighteenth century French philosopher, and the modern composer more than once stated that at first he

intended to use Voltaire's version. It was only when he heard that his relative librettist had prepared a more up-to-date transformation, that he changed his mind.

Among the French librettists of the Gluck-Piccinni period, just before the French Revolution, were Marmontel, whose 'Moral Tales' are still used in French lessons in British secondary schools, and the Englishman, Thomas Hales, who, under the pen-name of d'Héle, wrote some brilliant 'books' for the composer Grétry. Another once popular classic of English young ladies used by French teachers in England was 'Contes et Conseils à ma fille' by J. N. Bouilly, who was born in 1760 and died in 1840. He was the author of some famous libretti, including Grétry's 'Pierre le Grand,' the operatic masterpiece of Cherubini, 'Les Deux Journées' (known in England as 'The Water Carrier'), and Méhul's 'Chasse du Jeune Henri,' the overture of which is one of Sir Thomas Beecham's favourites. Bouilly also wrote 'Léonor, ou l'Amour Conjugal,' produced in 1798. It had only a short run owing to the weak music by Gaveaux, who ended his days in a lunatic asylum. Beethoven, however, made it a permanent success in the German translation known as 'Fidelio.' Ferdinand Paër had previously composed an Italian version for Dresden, and nearly forty years afterwards presented a copy of the published vocal score to his French pupil, Charles Gounod, and this was often seen on his pianoforte desk in his old age.

During the French Revolution, Hoffmann, the distinguished writer of the *Journal des Débats*, wrote for the composer Méhul some of his best opera libretti, viz., 'Euphrosine,' 'Stratonice' and 'Adrien.' But the last-mentioned was the cause of some trouble to him, and he was denounced before the 'Conseil des Cinq-Cents' in 1799 as an 'Anti-Républicain,' and the performances of the work were suspended for some time at the Paris Grand Opera. Picard, who was the most prolific writer of comedies at the opening of the nineteenth century, not only wrote comic opera libretti for the popular composers of his day, but was also manager of the Grand Opera House during the Napoleonic period. G. C. Etienne, another successful dramatist and librettist, who enjoyed the esteem of the great Emperor, and was made by him *Chef de Bureau de la Police des Journaux*, was the first author of distinction to recognise the merit as a composer of Boieldieu, and he transformed for him his comedy 'La Jeune Femme Colère' into an opera libretto. Etienne was also responsible for a play entitled 'Le Jugement Dernier, ou Haydn Vengé.' This was written to celebrate an intended visit of Joseph Haydn to Paris, when it was expected that the great composer would conduct a performance of 'The Creation' in the presence of Napoleon and the Empress Josephine. The 'book' of Méhul's still performed 'Joseph

and his *Brethren* was written by Alexandre Duval. He was in early life an actor of the 'rôles dits nécessaires' at the Comédie-Française, and subsequently became the author of a large number of successful plays and opera libretti produced at all the important Parisian theatres. He was also the first French playwright to bring out a comedy based on the life of the greatest English dramatist entitled 'Shakespeare Amoureux,' and was entrusted with important positions in the management of the State theatres during the Revolution, the Napoleonic era, and on the Restoration of the Bourbons. He was created a member of the French Academy by an *ordonnance* of King Louis XVIII. He had no difficulty in placing his opera libretti with well-known composers, as they were certain of almost immediate production. But these were well-made works by a master of stagecraft, in spite of his immense influence. Plannard was Hérold's favourite librettist, and he wrote for him 'Marie,' 'Pré aux Clercs' and 'Zampa.' The first was known to Schubert, as his publications include 'Variations on a Theme from Hérold's Marie, for piano, four hands' (1827, op. 82).

The change from the so-called classical period to the romantic movement did not prevent opera composers having an abundant supply of good 'books,' as almost every French literary man of distinction was anxious to achieve fame as a librettist. But Victor Hugo, the French literary giant of his time, who much against his wish had all his plays in succession plundered immediately after publication by Italian opera librettists, was often asked, and declined, to write libretti for French composers. 'The exceptional success' of his novel 'Notre Dame de Paris,' according to his wife-biographer, 'had brought on him,' she says, 'numerous requests from several musicians and amongst others from one very celebrated, Meyerbeer, who had desired that the novel should be an opera. He had always declined. But M. Bertin (proprietor of the *Journal des Débats*) requested it of him on behalf of his daughter, and he did for friendship what he had never done for money.' 'La Esmeralda,' by Louise Bertin, was a complete failure at the Paris Grand Opera, though it is now known that Berlioz (who also was musical critic of the *Débats*) revised the score and undertook the orchestration. This did not prevent the Italian librettists making use of it after the literary text was published. It was also used for one of Carl Rosa's most successful commissions to English composers, Goring Thomas's 'Esmeralda.'

The predominant French opera librettist of the 'twenties, 'thirties and 'forties of the nineteenth century was Eugène Scribe. With the assistance of collaborators, his school fellow, Germain Delavigne, and the inseparable Melesville, then came Dupin, Brazier, Varner, Carmouche, Bayard, Xavier Saintine, etc., he not only poured out

a rapid succession of brilliant plays, but also the libretti of the best operas of Boieldieu, Auber, Adolphe Adam and Halévy. All, with one exception, of Meyerbeer's French operas, Verdi's 'Vêpres Siciliennes,' and Gounod's 'La Nonne Sanglante.' The last was for some time in the hands of Berlioz, but he was so long in making up his mind in setting it to music that Scribe asked for the return of the MS., saying 'a priest must live by the altar.' Berlioz, who was much offended, seems to have spread the news of his treatment, with the result that all the then well-known composers, French and foreign, refused to touch the 'Bleeding Nun.' But Scribe was a business man as well as one of letters, and he always treated his literary and musical collaborators fairly. He never resorted to the undignified employment of 'ghosts.'

Among Scribe's successful contemporaries was Henri de Saint-George, who, alone and in collaboration, wrote nearly fifty libretti, and 'La Bohémienne,' the French version of 'The Bohemian Girl' of Balfe. Also Alphonse Royer, who was responsible for the 'book' of Donizetti's masterpiece, 'La Favorita,' which was originally given at the Paris Grand Opera. Richard Wagner was employed to prepare the vocal score for publication, and it is generally understood that in his spare time he assisted in copying out the orchestral parts.

After the French Revolution of 1848, Scribe found serious rivals in the persons of Michel Carré and Jules Barbier, who had become collaborators. The libretto of Gounod's 'Faust' was based on a *fantasie drame* by the first author (from Goethe's great work), called 'Faust et Marguerite,' produced at the Paris Gymnase in 1850. Carré and Barbier also supplied Gounod with the 'books' of 'La Reine de Saba,' 'La Colombe,' 'Romeo et Juliette' and 'Mireille' (from the Provençal poem of Mistral), Victor Massé with 'Galathée' and 'La Noce de Jeannette,' and Ambrose Thomas with 'Mignon.' Scribe, in his old age, was much alarmed when Meyerbeer accepted from Barbier the 'book' of 'Le Pardon de Ploermel' (known in England as 'Dinorah'), and even more hurt when the rising genius of *opéra bouffe*, Jacques Offenbach, refused his literary assistance. Jules Barbier wrote alone, near the end of his career, the libretto of Rubenstein's opera, 'Néron.' It was undertaken with a view to its production at the Paris Grand Opera, but was first given with a German translation at Hamburg in 1879. The Franco-German war, Rubenstein's residence in Dresden, and his known German sympathies were understood to be the main cause of its non-production on the stage in France. Marshal MacMahon, as President of the French Republic, tried hard to secure a hearing for the work at the Paris Grand Opera House, but the political clamour against the Russian musician was too strong for him to venture very far. There was

likewise another Barbier librettist, Auguste the poet, who wrote for Berlioz, in collaboration with Léon de Wailly, the libretto of 'Benvenuto Cellini.' This was his only contribution to the operatic stage, but he furnished the words for Berlioz's 'Hymne à la France,' composed for the Paris Exhibition of 1855.

The literary careers of two energetic Jews, Meilhac and Halévy, who both became members of the French Academy, afford an illustration that compilers of the most burlesque type of opera may be equally successful in the most tragic and serious opera. Meilhac and Halévy at the beginning of their careers were responsible for nearly all the 'books' of Offenbach's *opéra bouffes*, 'Orphée aux Enfers,' 'La Grande Duchesse,' etc., and concluded their operatic work with the libretto for Bizet's 'Carmen' (based on Prosper Mérimée's novel of the same name). After dissolving literary partnership, Meilhac devoted his attention to plays for the Comédie-française, and Halévy to novels, which are now considered as classics of French literature all over the world. Since the production of 'Carmen,' French opera libretti shows little or no signs of deterioration. In fact, the 'livret' is often better than the music.

ANDREW DE TERNANT.

THE PROM. AUDIENCE

By the 'Prom. audience' I mean the people who each year throng the ground floor of the Queen's Hall any or every evening from the middle of August to the beginning of October. The words 'each year' are important; for although, as I shall later recognise, very diversely constituted, the Prom. audience as a whole seems unchangeable, does seem to possess a character peculiar to itself which has lasted almost unaltered since the very first season thirty-five years ago. I confine my attention to the ground floor because although convinced that the habitués of the circle and the balcony are just as different from the ordinary concert audience as the promenaders downstairs are, I think they advertise the fact far less; to the casual onlooker they do not in the same way exude the characteristic 'Prom.' temperament.

Although the ground floor is spoken of as the 'promenade' it must not be overlooked that there are, I do not know exactly how many seats, but at any rate a great number. There are seats all round the circumference of the hall, and on the less crowded nights round a fountain in the middle. It is amazing to note how much of the long queue that has waited outside for perhaps an hour or more until the doors are opened at half past seven, is swallowed up by those seats before anyone needs to stand.

The seats have disadvantages. Those round the fountain are most eagerly sought, naturally, but the water is not quite silent and the orchestra is really too close for ideal audition. At the side of the hall the sound is, on the contrary, lost or distorted, owing to the overhanging circle; and interrupted, moreover, by the promenaders, who are most restless near the numerous doorways or in the corridor outside. That is, by the way, the first peculiar characteristic of the audience: it does—some of it does—promenade. Not merely between the items, but during the items. And a blighting nuisance it can be, what with squeaky shoes and heavy treads and creaking or thudding doors!

Even if you are fortunate enough to be standing towards the centre of the floor, wedged there, shall we say, on a crowded night, so that you are not troubled by movement around you, you are liable to suffer the equal annoyance of whispering, or, often enough, downright talking. I have yet to attend a concert of any kind in London at which I shall be from beginning to end completely free from the disturbance

of whispering. But the Prom. audience is far and away the worst I have encountered for that kind of incivility, indulging, as I have said, not merely in whispering, but in talking aloud whenever it thinks it will.

It is already, then, apparent that the Prom. audience is far from ideal either in its musical mentality (for it rushes to secure positions in the hall from which it is impossible to hear the orchestra properly) or in its social behaviour (for it ruthlessly chatters and stamps or squeaks about whilst the music is in progress). Another characteristic that is not flattering to either its common sense or its courtesy is its attitude towards encores.

The average Promenade concert is always too long. Yet encores are always insisted upon from the vocalists in the second half—to the number, even, I have known, of four from one singer; and are obtained whenever possible from instrumentalists in the first half; and are, in fact, sought on every conceivable and inconceivable occasion. A young man stood at my elbow shouting 'Core' at the top of his voice, the other week, to Albert Sammons, on his fifth (I think) reappearance to bow after playing for some three-quarters of an hour in the exhausting Elgar concerto. The time was 9.30; and the concert had still six items to go!

'The average Promenade concert is always too long.' That is on account of the audience. The audience is very important, for upon its size depends the financial welfare of the concerts. Its size is ensured by making it very composite. All tastes are catered for, all brands of listeners attracted. One kind of habitu  is typified by that youth in a green, open-necked shirt and floppy black sombrero whom I saw lounge away after the third item of one programme—the *premi re* of a Hindemith work—drawling 'There's nothing else worth hearing!' His sort are provided for. Then there is the large congregation of worshippers at the shrine of soprano high C's, roulades, and trills, and of golden, more often, in reality, brazen throated tenors. That congregation is rarely sent away unsatisfied. There are the old-fashioned sort of music lovers, who want their light overtures, their 'Largo in G,' their gavotte from 'Mignon,' or what not; there are the newer sort who demand Brahms and more Brahms or Tchaikovsky and more Tchaikovsky. There are the Beethoven fans, the Elgar fans, the Mozart and Haydn fans, the Bach fans, the Wagner fans, the budding-English-composer fans, the Russian-music fans. All these shades of musical partiality exist and are faithfully reflected in the Promenade programmes. Since the aim is to attract as large as possible an audience every evening an extraordinary number of those contrasting predilections are echoed in almost any single programme. Even on a Monday night, dedicated mainly to Wagner, one finds a novelty by

Miaskovsky, a couple of contemporary second-rate songs, and Sullivan's 'In memoriam' overture, in the second half. The sole exceptions, I think, are the Bach and Handel nights (their following apparently being large enough in itself). The incongruous variety of the programme is, in fact, a perpetual source of wonder to the sensitive but unreflective listener. Actually it is due simply to the necessity for filling the hall. One of the features of the Prom. audience is, after all, its fairly consistent magnitude. Analyse any programme and the reason will be obvious.

Another thing that frequently arrests the sensitive but unreflective listener is the apparent inconsistency of the Prom. audience. The same people, he amazingly observes, greet the first performance of a futurist composition with the utmost enthusiasm, shout themselves hoarse over the 'New World' symphony, manifestly dote on the 'Shadow song' from 'Dinorah,' seem to show excellent taste for Wagner, Bach and Bizet alike, and finally fall into ecstasies over the most mediocre of ballads jocosely bellowed, to piano accompaniment, by a, to all appearance, slightly 'elevated' baritone. The fact is, of course, that the 'same people' do not perform these almost inconceivable feats of catholicity. The minority who genuinely love the performance of the symphony go out into the corridor whilst the baritone takes his second-half encores; the clique who enthuse over Honegger or Schönberg do not stay for the rest of the programme; the adorers of Mme. Blank's gymnastic vocalism endure Bach with pain and Wagner with irritation. And so on. But since a few applauders can make a great deal of noise, and since many people applaud quite vacuously simply out of politeness or out of 'mob-feeling,' the gross result is that every item of the most incompatibly assorted Prom. programme seems to receive equally ardent and prolonged appreciation.

With regret, however, one has to record that the crowd as a whole does exhibit certain preferences. To give one example, I was present on a Wagner night on which some of the very cream of that master's work was played—'Die Meistersinger' prelude and prize-song, 'Siegfried's journey to the Rhine,' Isolde's 'Liebestod,' the Flower-maidens' scene from 'Parsifal,' and the 'Siegfried Idyll.' What a feast! One other Wagner item was performed, however; and this last it was that 'brought the house down.' Yes, the frantic applause it evoked far eclipsed that produced by any of those other glorious extracts. It was—the overture to 'Rienzi.' Need more be said?

So far I have only dealt with the really, if varying musical section of the audience. Proms. are, however, frequented quite largely by almost completely unmusical people. They are perhaps the only concerts in England (I except seaside activities) to which people will

'drop in' if left at a loose end for an evening, in the same way as they would 'drop in' to a cinema. Also they vie with the Philharmonic concerts and the Covent Garden season in having a regular *clientèle* who attend because it is 'the done thing' rather than from any discriminating artistic reason. Certain faces may be seen night after night in the queue, and the owners of those faces are, one finds inside, the most impartial and vociferous of applauders. To imagine that constant attendance will develop in them any qualitative standards, or even will jade their appetite, is very wide of the mark. They are, in fact, quite devoid of critical sense and enjoy a limitless relish for any and every kind of musical sound that is, so far as I can judge, unparalleled in any other imaginable sphere. The fattest and greediest of boys will sicken of sweets; the leanest of cats will reach the point at which he can turn away from fish; but London harbours a certain number of enthusiasts whose zest for music of all types, performed at almost every interpretative and technical level except the very best (which scarcely ever occurs at a Prom.—the circumstances are not conducive in any way) is to all appearance quite inexhaustible. In justice to the various kinds of genuine connoisseurs who, I have suggested, are present at each concert, it may be supposed that such things as the 'Rienzi' overture furore are to be attributed to those hardy *habitués* (together with the casual last-minute arrivals who drop in because the theatres and cinemas are full).

It is, then, hazardous to write about the Prom. audience as a whole. There is, however, one predominant feature, so predominant, at any rate, that those lonely figures that do not share in it are conspicuous thereby. Its truest name is smugness. Your tenant of Covent Garden boxes or stalls, going there because it is 'the done thing,' is often perfunctory, bored, inattentive, the reverse of enthusiastic. The Promenaders, on the contrary, glory in their cult and feel proud of themselves as thorough Bohemians and cognoscenti. One senses a pose equally in their silently *blasé* demeanour if alone and their determined vociferousness when in groups. As they are far more generally in groups the Queen's Hall air is saturated with a not wholly spontaneous laughter and jollity that in time pall upon the detached observer quite as much as a funereal gloom might, perhaps even more.

Yes, they are smug; and it must be confessed that the kind of publicity they receive in the Press leaves them little chance of being anything else. At any ordinary concert a large proportion of the audience (often a small audience, of course) are by way of being genuine connoisseurs. A Prom. audience contains, as I have suggested, connoisseurs of all colours, as well as a large number of what

really are, from the musical point of view, extremely 'half-baked' dilettanti. But they one and all glow with the consciousness of being in the 'Prom.' That is their common factor. The majority of them really do frequent the Proms. in just the same spirit as another sort of person might wear 'Oxford bags' or another wear a top hat and frock coat. It is a mistake to say that the Prom. audience is enthusiastic whereas the adherents of the sartorial fashions I have cited are not. Enthusiasm is simply part of the pose. Thus when Constant Lambert's 'Music for orchestra,' to give only one example, received its first performance scarcely a hand was still in the prolonged and deafening applause it evoked. Without betraying any critical opinion of the work, one way or the other, I may safely suggest that it was not in itself 'music for the masses'; nor in any case could the most expert and concentrated of critics, let alone 'the masses,' have taken it all in at one hearing. When Mr. L. Henderson Williams, one of the few writers hardy enough to say one word against the Proms. or their audience, ventured to wonder what they were all applauding so heartily for, I think his speculation a very apt one. He suggested that they did not know the reason themselves. I have not the slightest doubt of his correctness. He went so far as to say that the average Prom. audience is incapable, musically speaking, of anything beyond vague emotional reactions. Taking them as a whole he is right.

But to generalise is, as ever, dangerous. It must always be remembered, too, that if each round of clapping and cheering includes a high percentage of insincere, 'follow-my-leader' feeling it does also contain the modicum of genuine delightedness.

Probably there are, finally, quite a sprinkling of people who, like myself, at each Prom. they go to swear it will be their last. . . . But too much interesting music is played there that can practically never be heard otherwise for our vows ever to be kept.

RALPH W. WOOD.

PEPYS, THE MUSIC-LOVER

No one rejoiced more than Pepys when the Restoration brought about a revival of interest in music. Had a Puritan, who knew England during the stern days of the Commonwealth, returned to this country, ignorant of the fact that the exiled Royalties had come to their own again, he would have been as astonished as the Sleeping Beauty when she opened her eyes on an altogether different world. He would have been disposed to think, when he heard music and laughter again in the land, that his experiences under Cromwell's rule were an empty dream. Music during that period had been brought down to a minimum and had been deemed an abomination, even in the House of God. But in the very nature of things the old order gave place to the new, and Pepys, an intense lover of music, and being what Shakespeare called another, a 'snapper up of unconsidered trifles,' did not fail to deal with music in that inimitable Diary which has immortalised his name.

In the Diary there are numerous passages which show how music in England was lifted out of obscurity and reprobation and set going again in most happy style at the Restoration. Before Charles the Second had been many weeks on the throne, Pepys wrote this in his note-book: 'The organs did begin to play at Whitehall before the King.' Two or three weeks later Pepys was curious enough to go to Whitehall Chapel and hear for himself. He says he heard very good music, the first time that he ever remembered to have heard an organ, or to have seen the singing men in surplices. Choristers in churches were an abomination during the Commonwealth and therefore practically unknown, unless the service was held by stealth in some quiet out-of-the-way place in the countryside. The mummerly of white-robed singers was counted rank idolatry. In the logic and fury of his tremendous faith the Puritan turned away from music, from sculpture and painting, from architecture, from the adornments of costume, and from the pleasures and embellishments of society, because those things seemed only the devil's frippery. Whatever other drawbacks there were in the results of the Restoration, it was a most desirable gain to have this revulsion in favour of music, and to hear the delightful anthems again in public worship.

Pepys was enthusiastic as to the revival of music. 'Musique is the thing of the world I love most,' he wrote down once. Because he loved music so much it looms large in his Diary, and it was his 'utmost luxury.' If he was short with his wife sometimes, and so brought her to tears, it was because her soul had no music in it, and never yielded any return for the time and money squandered

on her musical education. His legitimate leisure time was full of it. There is the famous occasion when he had been singing with his wife and her maid, Mercer, in the garden and when, so he tells us, 'coming in, I find my wife plainly dissatisfied with me, that I can spend so much time with Mercer, teaching her to sing, and could never take pains with her, which I acknowledge; but it is because that the girl do take to musique mighty readily, and she do not, and musique is the thing of the world that I love most.'

Much could be said of Pepys's bold ventures into the musical world; and how he intimated his intention to invest 'a better theory of musique than hath yet been abroad'; and how he had the courage to compose a song which he named 'Beauty Retire,' and was always well-satisfied with the results of his endeavours.

One thing is noticeable in reading the Diary, and that is the number of musical instruments in common use in Pepys' day, compared with what may usually be found in our own homes. The list is a full one, and among them are the bandore, the cittern, the flageolet, the dulcimer, the ghitar, the harpsichord, the lute, the recorder, the theorbo, the triangle, the triangle-virginal, the virginals, the trumpet marine, trumpets, kettle drums, the viol, the lyre viol, the arched viol, the treble violin, and many others, as if their introduction was a direct challenge to those who excluded music in the gloomy days of the Commonwealth.

Music is so much to him that he fears to give too much time to it. He ventures to criticise elaborate vocal music, but he was competent in a certain degree. One of the foremost musicians of modern times said that Pepys possessed good judgment and, on the whole, a fairly unbiassed mind. He knew well the leading musicians of his day, he played various instruments, he studied singing, he attended the services at the Chapel Royal, at St. Paul's, at Westminster, and at St. George's Chapel at Windsor, making acute and often amusing comments on the various choirs and organists. He purchased and studied the best theoretical works of the day, both English and foreign, and he tried his hand at composition with very fair success.

The man was obsessed with music. One day, so he tells us, 'I, by water at night, late, to Sir G. Cartaret's, but there being no one to carry me, I was fain to call a skulker that had a gentleman already in it, and he proved a man of love to musique, and he and I sung together the way down with great pleasure, and an incident extraordinary to be met with.'

If for nothing else, lovers of music read with pleasure in the pages of the Diary short passages which show how music in England was lifted out of ruin and set going once more in happy style.

A. LEE.

MUSIC ON THE HEARTH

It was a kindly act on the part of calendar-makers to place St. Cecilia's Day upon the threshold of winter, a season particularly suited to the cultivation of music.

It is true that summer months have their own particular music—the music of the Maypole and the Harvest Home—but since music thrives best in artificial light, these months cannot compete with those of winter. Summer evenings are so light and so warm that we prefer to stay out in the garden, or else to play tennis or golf as long as it is possible, and then it is too late to settle down to serious music-making.

And by music-making I do most emphatically mean the making of music by inmates of the house, not the importation of music by means of wires and wax.

Winter then is the ideal time for music-making. Now let us consider the details of the setting, all of which contribute towards the success of our efforts. Well, we turn in from our walk or our work about four o'clock. It is already growing dusk. We close the door with a feeling of deep satisfaction that for the next few hours we shall have unbroken warmth, bright light and, we hope, a cosy tea with crumpets or hot-buttered toast. Mrs. Hannable, our hostess, who is to chamber music what Mrs. Battle was to whist, has laid it down 'that if we're going to have music we must have a good fire.' Certainly a smouldering, sulky fire which refuses to blaze except when thumped and poked will ruin the continuity of any music-making. It is impossible to keep one's soul keyed to the mood of Beethoven's trio in B flat when out of the corner of one eye we notice that the fire is bored to extinction. To get up and thrust a poker with ill-concealed petulance into a heap of smoky slack scarcely promotes a mood of sublime calm which is so needful for the interpretation of the lovely second movement. Well, then, we must have a good fire, if possible of dry apple wood, so that we can see those darting tongues of fire leaping up the chimney like greyhounds slipped from the leash.

Then we must have the curtains drawn in order to make us realise how fully man has learnt to cut himself off from the crudities and coarseness of nature. If the rain is lashing against the window so much the better: we are dry. If the outside world is deathly silent under snow, so much the better: we have a perfect background for our music. If the world is iron-bound with frost and breathes that

deep metallic monotone only heard at low temperatures, so much the better: we are warm.

Of all forms of social enjoyment there are few to equal and none to excel the pleasure of making music together. To play at games is good, but games are designed for the triumph of me over you. At bridge my partner and I are using our wits at their shrewdest (although the Portman Club might not suspect it) to cause the downfall of our opponents. In music my partner and I, in a string quartet, are doing our best to promote the success of the whole party. There is no feeling to be compared to that which music-ma'ug supplies, when having contributed one single note we find that by the contributions of others we have produced a chord.

The question now arises, what music shall we play? If only we had all the family together, including the rector and the doctor, we might have had Schubert's octet, or if the doctor was called away, Beethoven's septet, an alternative which almost reconciles one to the departure of the beloved physician into the cold and cheerless night. Perhaps we can do these lovely works some other evening.

To-night we are a small party and the available resources are cut down for the present because Lucy must write some letters, Charles must finish some delicate turning of a piston on his model boat, and Mary must mend that horrid jag in her skirt, caused by her folly in attempting to crawl through a hedge this afternoon. That means only two of us, Mrs. Hannable, the indomitable fiddler, and myself. Obviously then we must fall back upon a sonata for violin and pianoforte.

But which? Cesar Franck's we have played so recently, besides we always scramble the end of the second movement. What about Beethoven in C minor, or a Brahms? Yes, quite definitely, a Brahms. And which? G major? A major? D minor? Personally I love them in inverse order to their appearance, so let us play the D minor. And why do I love it best? Well, apart from details which I will mention later, I love it because it is so well-knit, because each movement has so definite a character and because it has none of those mean arid little subsidiary themes which Brahms seems purposely to have introduced into his music to act as counterfoils to the lyrical principal subjects. Those subsidiary subjects seem designed just to fulfil that rôle and are never allowed to gain in interest or importance. In this respect Brahms as a craftsman resembles Anthony Trollope, who, for all his skill at creating principal characters such as Mrs. Grantly, Mr. Crawley, etc., habitually devised as subsidiary characters figures not of flesh and blood but of sawdust and glue, viz., doctors, Berechild and Filgrave; lawyer, Chaffenbrass; poor curate, Mr. Quiverful. These puppets form the

necessary second-line characters of the story; they help forward the action, and they do not clash with or obscure the principals. So also these subsidiary themes of Brahms, they act as buffers between the possibly too lyrical subjects, they do not interfere with the development of the principals, in fact they are admirable from the craftsman's point of view. But they are (like these subsidiary characters of Trollope) too obviously artificial, and we know that some men, Dickens, for instance, could make subsidiary characters live as genuine creations, even though their life began and ended in one paragraph.

But let us to work! What a splendid theme this opening subject is. One feels the immense strength lying hidden in its wide-spaced rhythm. Was there ever a tune so obviously D-minor-ish and yet so little in D minor? It passes through every key on the outskirts of the tonic territory, but rarely reaches the Capitol. Students of Brahms will notice in this theme the composer's love of dropping in the middle of a theme into the key one whole tone below, *e.g.*, here in the sixth bar he drops into C major; in the E minor Symphony (first movement) he drops in the seventh bar into D minor.

The second subject, though possessing a certain distinction, the privilege shared by all children of clever parents, is unlovable and never worms itself into the affections. The development which concerns itself with the opening theme is very remarkable, being built entirely upon a pedal point, a feature which distressed so many people in the chorus 'But the ransomed souls' in the Requiem. To some critics this development appears simply a deliberate artifice, as if Brahms had determined to carry through an original idea even though he realised that the result was rather harsh and forced. To me the treatment seems completely satisfactory, suggesting a powerful personality lying supine on a hillside pondering on the pros and cons of some worrying situation. Each separate argument is threshed out with great mental vigour though the body remains inert. Then (at the recapitulation), after the whole problem has been reviewed and the resolution made, the thinker leaps to his feet (F sharp minor) and proves that in energy his body is the equal of his mind. And what a splendid passage that section is! Do we not feel with Browning 'the wild joy of living, the leaping from rock unto rock?'

And finally the coda. Here Brahms speaks with the kindly sympathy of one who knows how to face misfortunes. How tenderly those slow-dropping phrases in the violin speak to us in our despondency. 'You cannot help but grieve. You have made a great resolution and you have acted boldly, but fate was against you. Do not despond, for by such blows the spirit of man is tempered and made strong.'

The adagio, in spite of the luscious beauty of the opening bars, is not one of Brahms's best slow movements. Like the melody of the slow movement of Chopin's B minor Sonata, this melody seems incapable of getting away from a recurring major third, a bright interval which always catches the ear just as a gleam of sunlight will always catch the eye. In outline the tune is featureless, so much so that it is difficult to remember its progress after the first four bars. The continuation of the theme, which serves as a contrasting subject, is very arresting—the violin swinging up over a chord of the diminished seventh for two bars and bursting into double-stopping at the climax, like a great tragedian lashing himself into a fine burst of oratory. Apart from this, the whole movement is kept deliberately simple: a foil to the intellectual complexities of the first movement and the emotional violence of the finale.

The third movement, *un poco presto*, is one of the best and most characteristic of Brahms's scherzos. The first eight bars are ghostly, intangible—melody without substance; the remaining twenty bars, while being still ghostly, are much more clearly defined and substantial, though even now so fragile that a clumsy touch would spoil their fleeting beauty.

The whole movement is practically monothematic, such new fragments of melody as do occur springing naturally out of the initial theme. True, in the middle of the scherzo a fresh mood, built upon arpeggios and chords, is introduced, but it is difficult to say whether these arpeggios are the beginning of a new theme or the continuation of the old, just as Alice in Wonderland was embarrassed when she had to decide whether Humpty-dumpty's ornamental cincture was a waist-belt or a neck-tie.

The closing bars are written in Brahms's most allusive manner, the harmonies being implied rather than defined. And what a difficulty they present to the pianist! To fling fragments of chords about the piano at the required speed is difficult even when a certain roughness of tone is permissible, but when the same hair-raising difficulties have to be executed *pianissimo*, it is, as Mrs. Hannable says, 'like asking the Russian Ballet to perform their most agile feats upon the surface of cat-ice.'

The finale is one of the world's most vehement and stormy movements. Its energy is so terrific that it outstrips the capacity of the instruments for its expression. Pianistically, it resembles, in its demands upon the player, the rhapsodies in B minor and G minor.

Comparing this movement with other strenuous movements, such as the finales of Beethoven's Sonata in F minor, op. 57, and Schubert's C major Symphony, we find this difference, that whereas

they suggest speed this movement suggests conflict. If I were a grammarian I should have dragged in those solemn words of mystic meaning, objective and subjective, but I hesitate to do so because I always have to stop to ask myself what each means, just as I have to stop to think what a motor fiend means when he uses such expressions as 'put the clutch out' and 'put the clutch in.' Well, then, the movements of Beethoven and Schubert can be said to give a feeling of rapid movement; that we ourselves are whirling along in a fiery chariot. This movement, on the other hand, gives us the feeling of battling along a mountain road in the teeth of a raging wind which ever threatens to throw us off our balance.

In the first bar we find ourselves launched in the midst of this roaring storm, the piano grasping firmly the supporting harmonies, lest it should be carried off its feet by the violence of the gale. With the arrival of the second subject, almost a chorale, we pass, as it were, under the cover of some sheltering precipice and we can move along in tranquillity and comfort, but soon we are in the open road again, and the wind is pummelling us and pushing us, and lifting us and crushing us with rough and boisterous good humour. Just before we emerge from the shelter of the rocks we become aware of the existence of the wind by seeing a cloud of dead leaves caught up into a whirling cone and swept into the valley which lies below us. This unison theme will remind pianists of a similar sort of theme in double octaves *pianissimo* which adds yet another terror to the all-too-terrible pianoforte concerto in B flat.

The subsequent melody given to the violin is the most attractive of the movement, four bars of transparent harmony being followed by four bars rich in ninths and sevenths. What a wise craftsman was Brahms! To him harmony was a language of which every variety meant something definite. Chords were not to be used merely because they were strange—they must have their justification. Deliberately he kept his narrative-level on a low plane in order that when he chose to raise the level he could do so by little or by much. To-day the low narrative-level is not used, composers starting their most ordinary subject matter with a lurid blaze of dissonance which completely robs their higher levels of any significance. But to return to our playing.

Such development as occurs is sandwiched into the recapitulation and a rare example it is of Brahms's perverse love of cross rhythms and entanglements. Over some crisp pianoforte chords, the violin begins the first subject, now transformed into a broad, swinging tune (I feel sure that this section actually occurred to Brahms as he stumped along the road at Thun). Fearing lest this swinging melody should alter the general character of the movement, Brahms

continues the melody in a highly syncopated rhythm. This syncopation, provided that the initial theme is outlining the main beats, is most effective and easy to maintain, but when, as does happen, all the parts are syncopated together, the momentum and even the stability of the music is seriously threatened. At one point there is no foothold at all, and it is at this point that Mrs. Hannable's music invariably slips off the stand, and she is forced to stop, make her apology and restart at the top of the next page. As this has happened often, we doubt the genuineness of the accident and Charles wickedly maintains that he has seen her foot gently upsetting the equilibrium of the music-stand. But I, for one, refuse to believe it.

Anyway it is a great relief when this dangerous passage is passed, and oh! the joy of each player when he discovers that the other is with him, like that blessed feeling of relief which comes upon a motorist when, having successfully negotiated a tense situation, he finds that the other passengers are safe and sound.

From this point onward there is nothing to mar the players' enjoyment. True, there are superhuman difficulties to face, but they are difficulties which courage and warm blood can overcome, and fortunately a slight mistake is not likely to be noticed in the turbulent flow of harmony. Heavens! what a spirit must have burned within that calm rugged old man to have produced such a sustained flight of fancy. And what a miracle of art, that on a winter's night, warmed by a fire and sheltered from the snow, we can be transported on to the higher Alps and feel in our blood the exaltation which comes from battling with a blustering mountain wind.

Exhausted we lean back in our easy chairs and feel in our blood another call—the call for food and drink.

ALEXANDER BRENT SMITH.

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C. B. O.

REVIEWS OF MUSIC

The following abbreviations are used: O.U.P. [Oxford University Press], Ch[ester], Au[gener], Ha[wkes], L.G. & B. [Leonard, Gould and Boltler], K.P. [Keith Prowse], Cr[amer], El[kin], Pa[tersons Publications].

Pianoforte.

Some music is less approachable than one could wish and will only yield its message after a capable performance. Here is an example: a long piece by Alan Bush called 'Relinquishment' [O.U.P.] that looks interesting, full of invention of a queer, new kind. But it is a struggle for the ordinary pianist to get any consecutive meaning from it. Evidently something earnest is being said, though the manner of saying it does not help one to get at it. This piece is for the most able pianists and the most patient. 'Bach's Birthday' (Dyson) is an arresting title, but the contents have very little to do with Bach, skilful and amusing though they are [O.U.P.]. They need fingering throughout. And after that, for relaxation, let the pianist glance at Poulenc's 'Deux Novellettes' [Ch.] which are surely the most unintellectual fare, though just worth playing, that could be found after Dyson's harsh cerebration. Poulenc is one of the 'Six' group that has just celebrated its decennium. He has done better than this. The pianist is then introduced to two pieces by K. Dorothy Fox [Senart, Paris]. The prelude has points, but the pianist will notice that the writing is ungainly in places (p. 3). However, there is something pleasant about it (and about the slighter scherzo) which, while it does not make good music, causes one to keep an open mind for later work. One short piece by Harold G. Skidmore called 'Solitude' [Au.] is worth looking into. Its worst failing is a complacent succession of rather ordinary harmonies, pretty enough at a first hearing, but not to be given another. From among a series of pieces by Thomas S. Harold the 'Prelude solennelle' (why not Solemn Prelude?) is attractive. The others do not come up to it [Au.].

Studies are in a separate category. Six of them by Felix Swin-stead [O.U.P.] are amusingly put together, the sort of thing that is good for your fingers (if you are fairly advanced) and not boring for your understanding. Stephen Heller's studies one imagined were dead long ago, but O.U.P. has brought them back and made them available (in two grades) for beginners, who need not be afraid of their being distasteful.

Something more for the high-grade expert is Aubyn Raymar's transcription (edited for concert performance) of the F minor Fantasia that Mozart wrote for the mechanical pianoforte. [O.U.P.]. One has known it as an organ piece. This transcription is difficult and the pianist will have plenty to keep him busy.

Artur Schnabel has edited Beethoven pianoforte sonatas. The op. 31 No. 2 has been sent to us [Ullstein and O.U.P.]. The point is clear, which is an important point in an edition like this with

fingering, pedalling, expression marks, footnotes included. It is the edition for the teacher, and for the executant who has enough knowledge of the sonatas to pick and choose among the different renderings that go around nowadays. Schnabel at least can be trusted to be reasonable, and this early sonata gives the impression that he does not do anything thoughtlessly. The fingering (read the preface) is extremely interesting (and unusual in places), the pedalling carefully noted. There are not too many of those strange signs and signals which usually disfigure modern editions of the classics. Teachers will find useful material in 'Heel and toe' by Martin Shaw [Cr.], 'The king's house' by Norman O'Neill [L.G. & B.], and sets by J. Haydon Bull, Moyna Conway and Julia Fox [K.P.].

Three books (1, 5 and 6) of the 'Hundred best short classics' [Pa.] are excellent material for school purposes. They are arranged in grades, from 'elementary' (book 1) up to 'advanced' (book 7). The three sent us have pieces by most of the great composers from Bach to Brahms. They are fingered, and the print is clear. The first book is edited by Cuthbert Whitmore, the others by Harold Samuel. Each piece is headed by remarks as to speed, phrasing, &c.

Songs.

Two songs by Granville Bantock show that same sense of pictorial effect that always has been this composer's strong point. 'The washer of the ford' is dramatic and has a florid accompaniment [Cr.]. 'Longing' is smoother and more simple [El.]. An interesting song is Evelyn Sharpe's setting of Wilde's 'Holy week at Genoa' [L.G. & B.]. Its form is satisfactory, its progressions mean something definite. 'Pan on the death of Daphnis' also is a good song, rather clumsy in places (like the last mentioned song) and yet with a certain freshness and sincerity. Cyril Crafton is the composer [Au.]. Of three songs by E. d'Arba [Ch.] one calls for notice, a setting of a poem by Verhaeren 'Les deux enfants de roi,' which is sensitively done, though the words are capriciously accented. 'A mist of bluebells' by Hubert Brown [W.R.] has an unadventurous vocal line, and variegated harmonies laid out in successions of chords such as Delius might have used. Herrick's 'Lord thou has given me a cell' is set by George Dyson, broad and diatonic, with some pleasant changes of key and a vocal line that does some fine soaring. It would make an excellent school unison song [Cr.].

Six songs from Shakespeare set by Hubert Foss include (inside their ingeniously designed cover) some delicate, even workmanship. 'Fear no more' will probably please the most. The duets at the end (voices needed that are certain of their upper register) must be amusing to do. It is pleasant to be able to renew acquaintance with Herbert Howells's song-cycle 'In green ways' that has been lately heard on the concert platform. Still one wonders at the courage shown in setting Goethe's 'Ueber allen Gipfeln,' though now one sees better how more nearly right this attempt is than when it was first heard. But it should have come last (if it were, for that matter, to be placed with any other poems). The poet felt he could do little more than weep when, in later years, he came across the lines that so bitterly brought before him the passage of time. Here they are followed by a set of triolets that, poor little thing, cannot stand the close contiguity. This tiny song, 'On the merry first of May,' thus loses its charm. Either banish it from the same cycle as the Goethe poem,

or let it appear first. Taken as a whole the cycle is full of interest and has some beautiful moments. Two songs by Rebecca Clarke increase respect for her powers. 'Cradle song' is the more immediately charming, with its delightful accompaniment that is suggestive and not slavish. 'The cherry-blossom wand' needs great care in performance or it will certainly sound vague and maundering. Both are interesting for the singer. Patrick Hadley and Norman Peterkin have both set the same poem, Byron's 'So, we'll go no more a-roving.' The first thinks of some underlying emotion peculiar to his reading of the poem. The second makes a lyric song. Singers may choose which suits their mood the better. As a song each is as good as the other. Two songs by John Henn Collins suffer from not knowing where they are going. They seem to belong to the class of interesting beginner's work. 'The seekers' by Gordon Slater has atmosphere, a heavy stern purposefulness with bells in the middle, and a return to the first mood. It is a song with character. So too is Godfrey Sampson's 'She walks in beauty,' which really does attract, though there is an unfortunate ordinariness in the cadences that does not fit the originality of what went before. [All these from O.U.P.] Martin Shaw has made up a little set of songs to be sung by children (and accompanied by a musical elder) which should become popular [Cr.].

Finally, a number of arrangements, to be had separately, of Bach and Handel [Pa.]. By this means numbers from the church cantatas, the operas and oratorios are made available. The editing seems careful and trustworthy. Among these songs are many whose existence is unknown to the generality of singers.

Part Songs.

From the reign of Henry VIII there comes [O.U.P.] 'Where be ye, my love' to show what grace could in those days go to a S.A.T.B. song. Last year's date is printed on an equally fine piece of part-writing by Charles Wood, of Cambridge, 'The bag of the bee' [O.U.P., for SS.A.T.B.]. The two might be put on one programme, and the modern would not suffer by comparison. Granville Bantock is another able modern writer of this kind of music, and his 'Grammarian's funeral' [O.U.P.] is a dramatic and variegated setting for TT.BB. How they did such things in Germany in the last century can be seen (and tried out by a competent choir of S.A.T.B.) in his 'Abendlied' (it has English words added), which is interesting both for singers and pianoforte [Au.]. Christopher Le Fleming ('Cradle song') and Tustin Baker ('Sing, O sing this blessed morn') both contribute carols that are worth considering. The first in unison, the second S.A.T.B. [O.U.P.]. 'On a poet's lips I slept' for three female voices, by Edward Bairstow, will need care, but repay it fully. It is out of the ordinary [Haw.]. Two songs for a trio of female voices by Julius Harrison are useful additions to that class of composition [Haw.]. Edward Bairstow's 'Music when soft voices die' is for TT.BB. and is the sort of work that is worth taking trouble over [Haw.]. Greville Cooke's 'Claribel' and 'O hush thee my baby' (both S.A.T.B.) should sound smooth. They are not difficult [Haw.]. The same may be said of Alec Rowley's accompanied two-part song in this series. Ernest Bullock's 'As I walked out' is another sound piece of writing, not too difficult for moderate singers [Haw.].

The series of Oxford folk-song arrangements continues to be

interesting, and will have something to offer for those who want folk-songs for their choral societies. Four before us are arranged by Edward Bairstow ('The oak and the ash,' especially deftly done), W. G. Whittaker (a good straightforward setting of 'The Lincolnshire poacher'), Edmund Duncan-Rubbra ('Afton Water'), and John Vine ('A farewell,' Irish). All are for S.A.T.B. In the Oxford Old Masters series there is a welcome reprint of rounds and catches by Mozart (edited by W. G. Whittaker), twenty-two little things of every variety of complexity, length, mood. Lastly, two volumes (II and III) of the Clarendon Song Books [O.U.P.], complete with sol-fa and staff single-part editions. These are useful, well printed, and contain a great deal of old and modern music suitable for schools.

Orchestral.

A 'Denbigh suite' for string orchestra by Gordon Jacob asks for special notice. It is to be commended to music masters in schools that have a good string band. The four movements are all delightful and cannot fail to interest and amuse. Great skill is shown in the writing, which is varied enough to be difficult, and yet is always kept within reach of the average young player. 'Salt o' the sea,' by Gordon Stutely, comes within hailing distance of that, but just does not reach the mark. The method of dealing with these tunes is not expert enough to save the thing from becoming a little boring. It is more difficult than the Denbigh suite. Two instrumental movements from J. S. Bach's 'Geist und Seele wird verwirret' are reprinted in a handy form, and the same is done for the exhilarating sonata from 'Der Himmel lacht,' a movement that all small instrumental bodies should possess even if trumpets and drums are not available. Schools should try Thomas Dunhill's arrangement and adaptation (for strings, with double-bass) of movements from the Anna Magdalena Bach *Notenbuch*. They are all possible for fair players.

A miniature score [Ch.] of Lord Berner's Fugue (full orchestra) brings this highly diverting piece of music within reach of the ordinary concert-goer. Students of instrumentation will be glad to have an opportunity of seeing how the noises are made. More than that, the score (very clearly printed) is a welcome addition to a miniature score library, to be placed with Berner's 'Fantaisie Espagnole.' They both mark a stage in modern English composition.

Church Music.

Three numbers edited by H. B. Collins [Ch.] are meant for choirs that are advanced enough to perform sixteenth and seventeenth century polyphonic music. They are: 'Ego sum panis vivus,' by Byrd, a fine example of a four-part motet; a six-part Palestrina motet, 'Dum complerentur'; and a five-part motet by di Lasso, 'Christus resurgens' [Ch.] Two numbers from Tudor church music, and more than that from the Oxford series of Bach arias, make it necessary to remind readers to go through the complete series and make their own choice among these excellent reprints [O.U.P.].

Sc. G.

REVIEWS OF BOOKS

John Christian Bach. By Charles Sanford Terry. London. Oxford University Press. Humphrey Milford. 25s. net.

Unlike his father, John Sebastian, the subject of this book led a life in the full glare of publicity. Unlike his father, again, he was just a good, sound musician. None of his music now seems worth listening to by the successors of that gay London world he served. But the recounting of his life, strangely enough, repays the trouble of collecting facts about it. Dr. Sanford Terry has excelled himself here, and has produced a volume that holds something of interest to the general reader as well as to the musical scholar. J. C. Bach's ancestry did not hinder him. Unlike most great men's sons he was able to impress men with what he himself was, not with what it was taken for granted the bearer of a famous name should be. In some ways this was rendered easy for him because Sebastian Bach's contemporary fame was small. But this much must be allowed the son: he had character. His life in Italy, as shown in his dealings with Martini and Litta, strengthened a natural acuity of disposition and gave him useful exercise in managing men and mastering situations. London followed, and there his success was great. His concerts with Abel in Soho and at Almack's became part of the social round. He was taken up by the Queen, painted by Gainsborough. This last fact allows us to gauge his renown as a musician, for the portrait was asked for by Martini himself, of all people, an honour accorded to few. J. C. Bach, the musician, is as faithfully dealt with by Dr. Terry as is the career of Sebastian's youngest son, and the thematic catalogue in this volume gives all necessary information about the compositions, both secular and religious. The numerous illustrations, including two of the Gainsborough portrait and the copy made by the painter, increase the pleasure of reading this account of well-lived life.

Sc. G.

The elements of fugal construction. By C. H. Kitson. Oxford University Press. London: Humphrey Milford. 7s. 6d. net.

The teaching of interpretation in song. By Dawson Freer. Winthrop Rogers, Ltd. London: Hawkes and Son. 2s. 6d. net.

These are text books which will help the amateur as well as be of use to the student. Prof. Kitson starts off by agreeing that there 'are very few, if any, absolute rules, and that, as regards details of construction, the principles are very elastic.' That healthy kind of statement belongs to this century. Personal experience, at any rate, goes to prove that even twenty years ago it was thought rather daring. The same, too, of this author's criticism of J. S. Bach in the matter of fugal Answer. But both attitudes seem nowadays to be justifiable. It is better to look the classics straight in the face than to deceive ourselves about their inviolability. Prof. Kitson, in being frank about

the '48,' has deserved well of his readers, and indeed his book may be recommended as being informative and singularly unpedantic.

Mr. Freer has some useful information to give, but his book, which is meant for students as well as teachers, keeps nearer the surface than Prof. Kitson's. It is really too short for so large a subject. It is impossible adequately to deal with 'Songs, good and bad' in five and a half pages, and any mention of 'Different ways of expressing emotion,' confined to fourteen lines of print, is bound to be trite. This is a handbook for beginners. After it they should take up Plunket Greené's *Interpretation in song*, which we remind them of here, because Mr. Freer omits it from his list of 'Books recommended.'

Sc. G.

The truth about Wagner. By P. D. Hurn and W. L. Root. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

The object of this book is to show that Cosima Wagner was unjust to Minna Wagner. The authors base this accusation on the copy of the original autobiography which they appear to have seen in the Burrell collection but not to have read. That may be their misfortune. Their fault is that upon this ignorance they build innuendos and surmises, to which no reasonable man will attach importance. The truth about Wagner, or any other musician of that eminence, is contained in his music. There is nothing about music in the book. A review of it would therefore be of no interest to the readers of this magazine.

A. H. F. S.

REVIEWS OF PERIODICALS

De Muziek. Amsterdam. December, 1929.

Dr. A. A. Smijers, responsible for the complete edition of the works of Josquin des Prés now appearing in Holland, gives a short account of Josquin, describes the edition (a subsidy of about £1,500 has been collected for this work, and since 1919 the libraries of Italy, France, England, Germany and Austria have been searched and about six thousand photographic reproductions of their contents made), and discusses a special point in his edition of one of Josquin's songs. Heer Stephan Lubinski continues his article on Japanese music. The Editor contributes an article on 'Musical Value,' finds that this exists in Melody, and proceeds to a discussion of modern music viewed from that aspect.

January, 1930.

The Editor continues his research into the melodic aspect of modern music. Dr. Erwin Felber of Vienna writes on *Sprach-gesang*, and displays wide knowledge of languages and dialects of East and West. Heer Paul Sanders has an article on the parallel development of the art of music and culture in general.

February.

A short article on Alban Berg by Dr. Willi Reich describes the new concert-aria, 'Der Wein,' by the composer of 'Wozzeck.' Two laudatory articles on Dutch musicians, one Cornelis Dopper, the second-in-command at the Concertgebouw, the other, Matthijs Vermeulen, the hardy critic who has never shrunk from plain-speaking about that very institution. Dr. Paul Sanders writes on the 'Fledermaus.'

Zeitschrift für Musikwissenschaft. Leipzig. November, 1929.

Herr Peter Wagner describes a mediæval song (probably twelfth-century) in praise of the organ, a humorous composition ending with a prayer for the organist's soul: *Huius artis praeceptorum secum deus det Guidoni vitam aeternalem fiat amen.* As the author says, it is one of the earliest known examples of humour in music. The same writer describes a Table of Neums which must have been used for the teaching of choristers. Both MSS. come from the archives of the Thomaskirche, Leipzig. Herr Knud Jeppensen of Copenhagen, fired by extracts made by J. B. Trend from the printed catalogues of the Colombina Library in Seville, has spent some time studying on the spot. His article in this number tells of the results of work among the Italian frottole, notably the *Laudi* of Ottavio dei Petrucci. A historical survey of music at Baden-Baden in the sixteenth century is contributed by Herr Otto zur Nedden. There is a long article by Herr Ursprung on new literature on the history of Spanish music.

December.

Herr Wagner continues his researches at the Thomaskirche, and here describes an early treatise on theory. Herr Erich Hertzmann has an article on the employment of double-choral writing in the sixteenth

century, and places the first use of this method not in Venice (where Willaert is supposed to have introduced it) but in France and the Netherlands somewhat earlier. Herr Biehle writes on the æsthetic basis of French singing in the seventeenth century. Herr Heinrich contributes an article on the *Resonanztheorie*, by which is meant, not acoustics, but the state of receptivity existing in the musically-minded, not in sound but in what lies behind sound, either 'in symbolic visions, or in the supposed union of the hearer's soul with that of the creative artist.'

January, 1930.

Herr Ursprung has a long article dealing with Grecian influence on mediæval European music, a specialist's contribution, much documented. Herr Peter Epstein introduces an early German violin master, Heinrich Litzkau (latter half of seventeenth century). Herr Fred Hamel writes on the Schemelli song-book and states reasons for agreeing with Schering's ascription of three songs only to J. S. Bach (it was once held that forty-seven were by him).

La Revue Musicale. Paris. November, 1929.

A study of the Brazilian composer, Hector Villa-Lobos, by Suzanne Demarquez is useful. Knowledge of this considerable composer is limited in England to the few pianoforte pieces that Arthur Rubinstein has made public. Villa-Lobos (born 1890) has worked in all mediums, and has written five operas, six symphonies and a great deal of chamber music. An article by M. Robert Jardillier discusses the place of music in the Lycée curriculum. The description, by Rudolf von Beyer, of a visit to Schopenhauer is diverting. M. Norbert Dufourq has something useful for the historian to say about electric organs, and M. Maurice Cauchie contributes a note on Richard Renvoisy (Nantois, sixteenth century). Finally, there are more of M. André Suarès's *Pensées*.

January, 1930.

An article by M. Jean Royère (the reader will remember his study of Mallarmé) on language and rhythm, with special reference to Baudelaire, should not be missed. M. Koechlin breaks a lance 'for Chabrier,' refuting the charge of vulgarity. A short note on Maurice Ravel, hardly a page, by M. Jean Cocteau, contains this significant sentence: '... nous ne fûmes pas loin de croire, avec l'injustice aveugle de la jeunesse, qu'il ponctuait le vide, plaçait des accents aigus et même des accents graves sans écrire dessous. Maintenant l'injustice, les griefs, les mauvaises fois, les ruses, les esclandres, notre jeunesse hélas reposent. . . . L'œuvre de Ravel nous enchante.' It must be remembered, in this connection, that M. Cocteau is the acknowledged spokesman of young musical France . . . and of 'Les Six.' An article by M. André Tessier gives a glimpse of France of the last century in describing Bonaventure Laurens. M. Roger Guibert writes similarities of method in the works of composers far separated in time.

La Rassegna Musicale. Turin. October, 1929.

A number devoted to Monteverdi. Signor G. F. Malipiero introduces with some general praise and homage. Signor A. Tessier writes on Monteverdi's philosophy of art, chiefly drawing on Giulio Cesare's preface to the *Scherzi Musicali* and the composer's letters to Doni and

Striggio. The Venetian period is dealt with by Signor Ortolani, and M. Prunières contributes an article on French music of the period.

November.

Signor Pincherle starts a biographical study of Antonio Vivaldi. M. André Schaeffner's article on the history and significance of Stravinsky's 'Sacre du printemps' has some useful information for the biographer. There is a pleasant article by Signor Parigi on Carducci.

December.

Signor Petrini discusses the Divine Comedy from the standpoint of music, that of verse, of the spoken word. Signor Pincherle ends the study of Vivaldi. Signor Cimbri contributes an article on tonality, in which he debates the question of a stable tonic.

January, 1930.

The first number of the bi-monthly *Rassegna* has three pleasing features: a well-designed cover, good paper, good print. The first is new, the other two are real improvements. Prof. Dent writes about Ferruccio Busoni, his Italian ancestry and sympathies. It is an article that will, we hope, appear in English. Signor Pannain deals with Richard Strauss so thoroughly that there is little left of the unfortunate composer, who finds no favour in this quarter. Signor Parente discusses colour and form in music. Signor Petrini has an article on Wagner, with special reference to 'Tristan.'

The Musical Quarterly. New York. January, 1930.

H. Morgan-Browne on Wagner, Henry Prunières on Roussel, Victor Belsiev on Olenin's reminiscences of Balakirev are all worth reading. Hilda Andrews deals with Elizabethan keyboard music, and Edgar Istel with Paganini's technique. R. Raven-Hart's article on Composing for Radio has some new and useful things to say. An article on communal music among Arabians and negroes deals with the theory of a communal origin for folk music, as exemplified in experiences of crowd psychology among both peoples. Virginia Stearns Beede contributes a study of Breton folk-songs. J. G. Prod'homme gives information about the economic status of musicians in France up to the Revolution.

Modern Music. January, 1930.

Nicholas Roerich's article on Diaghilev is one of the best so far; André Schaeffner's is also worth reading; Darius Milhaud's gives a glimpse of the Impresario as distinct from the artist. Hans Gutman sends a short description of the new Hindemith work 'Neues vom Tage.' Paul Stefan writes on Schönberg's operas.

Journal of the Folk-Song Society. London. December, 1929.

Carols collected in Cornwall, East Anglian variants of familiar ballads, and two early MS. copies of Manx traditional carols are printed in this issue, with notes by their collectors.

Sc. G.

GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

Vocal

Decca.—Vaughan-Williams: *On Wenlock Edge* (Steuart Wilson, the Marie Wilson String Quartet and Reginald Paul). This is a good performance. Listening to it one tries to get at the reason for Steuart Wilson being better than anyone else for this song-cycle, and it seems to be because he keeps his voice youthful in quality. For anyone who knows the Shropshire *Lad* well this is important. In 'Is my team ploughing?' the effect of a ghostly question and a living answer is admirably suggested. The quartet and pianoforte accompaniment is good. Probably all performers would have been better pleased to do it all over again, to set right some details after hearing this record. Why was the order changed? To the lay listener the contact of (2) and (4) on one record is ruinous. (To obviate that another record would have to have been used, but from the artistic standpoint there could be no other way.) Steuart Wilson can also be heard in two sides—'The crocodile' and 'Rio Grande,' both traditional songs.

Olga Olgina sings 'Una voce' in a very adequate Rossini manner, and Valentina Aksarova's Tchaikovsky song (in Russian) is well done (so much better than her singing of Massenet on the reverse side of the record). Two operatic records sung by English artists (in their own language): Richard Watson makes a pleasant record of excerpts from Rossini's 'Barber' and Mozart's 'Seraglio'; and Frank Titterton is very effective (clear, even singing is something to be grateful for here) in two excerpts from 'Tosca.' Who prefers sound English songs of the rousing type may hear two sides by Roy Henderson—'King Charles' and 'Simon the cellarer.'

H.M.V. Wagner records. *Tristan und Isolde*. Frida Leider and Lauritz Melchior (with the Berlin State Opera orchestra under Albert Coates) are responsible for four sides taken from the second act. These records are not continuous. There is a break between the first and second, one between the third and fourth, and a cut in the

middle of the fourth. The cuts are skilfully managed and need not bother the ordinary listener. Use a soft needle, for singing and orchestra are apt to be noisy. Performance is very good.

Meistersinger. Fine singing is to be heard in a record made by Friedrich Schorr, the *Wahn* monologue (two sides). The balance of voice and orchestra favours the former a little, which makes the diction excellently clear while at the same time it causes the ear to tire by the end of the record. Otherwise it is a great performance, and whoever can appreciate perfectly true intonation and the nicest attention to diction, let him listen to 'Gott weiss, wie das geschah' at the end of the first side. Effective recording is done by Joseph Hislop: the Prize Song (with the Narration from *Lohengrin* on the other side). This record is in English.

Goldmark: *Die Königin von Saba* (Maria Nemeth and chorus, with the Vienna State Opera orchestra). These two sides provide excerpts from the first and third acts of an opera seldom heard here. The music has an attractive quality. Both records suffer from shrill tone. The chorus has it, the singer also. The record can be heard to best advantage in a large room with a soft needle.

Puccini: *Tosca*. Excerpts from the first and second acts are sung by Giovanni Inghilleri, in Italian, with orchestral accompaniment. An effective record, again apt to be noisy unless softened by the right kind of needle.

Verdi: *Otello*. Renato Zanelli, with an orchestra from La Scala under Carlo Sabajno, sings two excerpts from the third and fourth acts (the death scene). This is excellent Italian opera singing and a very good piece of recording.

Giordano: *Andrea Chenier* (Margaret Sheridan and Pertile, with orchestra and conductor as above). The two sides are both from the final scene of the fourth act. The softest needle will still be adequate for this strong singing.

Chamber Music

H.M.V. Mendelssohn: *String Octet in E flat major, op. 20* (The International String Octet). Most will find this a record to play over and over again. Without knowing the history of this octet one falls under the spell of its freshness and strength. Even after more repetition than any work should be given (but which the gramophone rather unkindly makes easy) it remains beautiful. Then one finds that it was written by a boy of sixteen, and at once the mind begins to find patches of awkward writing, or imagines it does, so ready is one to explain away an initial enthusiasm. But the work remains, a wonder and a delight. There are eight sides to this very fine recording, and all that need be said is that no collector should be without them.

Dohnanyi: *String quartet in D flat major, op. 15* (The Flonzaley quartet). The three movements of this work have some charming music in them. Surely the Flonzaley quartet have played better than they do here? One seems to be aware of a hardly agreeable unsolidity in the tone, and some faulty intonation as well. The scherzo is the best piece of playing.

Beethoven: *The Kreutzer sonata* (Cortot and Thibaud). Good, not fine, playing. Pianoforte tone suffers from the usual insecurity, which may not be the player's fault, though some records are better. Violin tone also is unsteady in places. On the whole the record is to be recommended if only for the music's sake, and for the better aspects of the performance which though uneven has moments of great success.

Orchestral

H.M.V. Brahms: *Concerto for piano-forte and orchestra in B flat major, op. 83* (Arthur Rubinstein and the L.S.O. conducted by Albert Coates). This was needed. It is a successful record, and an interesting one for those who are attentive listeners. The pianist shows a remarkable and enviable technique, no difficulties stop him. His reading of the music is impetuous, exuberant, wilful, but always assured. Many will feel that there is something a shade perfunctory about this smart method. But the notes are there all right. Pianoforte tone is bad at the opening of the third movement, and so is that of the violoncello. The orchestra plays very adequately, with a little of the soloist's perfunctory spirit. But one is grateful

to the conductor for setting a real *largamente* at the beginning of the second section of the second movement, instead of the *andante* so frequently allowed.

Liszt: *Concerto for piano-forte and orchestra in E flat major* (Levitski and the L.S.O. conducted by Landon Ronald). This was a good choice of soloists, for Levitski is suited by Liszt, and Liszt by Levitski's hard, exact brilliance. The pianist, also, is one of those who comes through well in this medium. The record is for those who like showy music and the wonders of pianoforte technique.

Rimsky-Korsakov: *Overture—May Night* (the L.S.O. conducted by Albert Coates). This is welcome—delightful music well played. It haunts one, with its fine orchestral effect and that naïf tune on the second side.

Turina: *Danzas Fantasticas* (the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Eugene Goossens). The three movements are on four sides. They go with a snap. The tone seems generally good—recognisably like the instruments, which is important in such an 'orchestral' work as this. It is light music of the best kind, and gay stuff to turn on in odd moments.

J. S. Bach: *Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F major* (the Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski). This is for those who do not mind their Bach just a little glorified, for the orchestra sounds heavier and more coloured than is usual with Bach here at present. But the playing, apart from that, is inoffensive and straightforward enough. The second movement comes through as a grand piece of rich tone. The same orchestra and conductor are heard in a Bach choral prelude (on the reverse of the last side of the above) that makes an effective movement. We are not told who is the orchestrator.

Debussy: *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (Philadelphia Orchestra conducted by Leopold Stokowski). Better than foreign records one has heard. Flute rather breathy at the start. Use a soft needle, for even a medium one destroys the poetry, especially in this rendering which tends towards inflation at a climax.

Beethoven: *March from the Ruins of Athens* (Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Karl Alwin). This must be included for the fun of it. Noise is here in place. So too with the *Turkish March* by Mozart (on the other side). The playing is satisfactory and highly satisfying.

Decca. William Walton: *Portsmouth Point* (the New Symphony Orchestra conducted by Anthony Bernard). It is impossible to escape from the fact that this is mainly noise, though a good noise. One is glad to have this recording of an interesting piece of modern English work, and an amusing piece of writing. At one moment, so the pianoforte score seems to show (round about 12), the whole thing comes perilously near disaster, but it manages to pull itself together and to end happily. It is a difficult nut to crack, from the player's point of view.

Glinka: *Kamarinskaya* (the Decca Symphony Orchestra conducted by Leslie Heward). This is a record to have and to keep. It is performed well, and the music has freshness.

Elgar: *Wand of Youth, suite No. 2* (the Decca Military Band conducted by Charles Leggett). Light Elgar needs lighter treatment than this. However, the playing sounds fairly even and true, and with a soft needle it tells.

Solo Instruments Pianoforte

Chopin: *Four Ballades* (Alfred Cortot). It was time these were recorded together, by the same executant. They make an interesting study of methods. Unfortunately they exist in a medium always the most difficult to reproduce with adequacy. But that must be accepted as it is. Cortot provides readings that are properly poetic. There is a slight untidiness that surprises one when listening to an artist of this quality. But the impetuous moments are excellent.

Franck: *Prelude, choral and fugue* (Alfred Cortot). Four sides which contain some notable playing. It is refreshing to hear the upper part of

the choral perfectly clearly done (also to be able to listen without having to look, with that perpetual wonder that one has with all pianists as to whether they will manage it every time). Surely the final coda is enriched with octaves? It sounds too thick.

Violin

Mozart: *Minuet in D* and Paganini: *Caprice No. 13* (Arthur Catterall). A thoroughly good record. The playing is clear and scholarly. It comes through well. The *Caprice* is arranged by the performer. Not often is a solo record so much worth keeping.

Organ

Bach: *Passacaglia* and *Fugue in C minor* (Marcel Dupré). Evidently the organ can be persuaded to record well. This, at least, is a remarkable vindication of its powers in that direction. Marcel Dupré's playing is sturdy and honest and quite suitable to instrument and subject.

Boëllmann: *Suite Gothique* (Reginald Goss-Custard). This must not be played after Bach. In fact, it is for Boëllmann-lovers or for organists in general, not for Bach-lovers at all. The playing is expert, and again the organ comes through excellently.

Choral

Decca. 'God rest you merry, gentlemen' and 'Dives and Lazarus' (the Decca Choir conducted by Arnold Goldsbrough). Singing here is rhythmic, but for some reason not easy to fix upon, the general effect is tame. It is probably a question of tone, and whether that is a matter of reproduction or of actual quality of choral tone is hard to say. Perhaps some of both. But this record is not to be set aside, for it is pleasant to hear. Both sides (one traditional, the other by Holst) are Christmas fare.

Sc. G.

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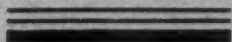
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